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# CENTENNIAL REVIEW

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LITTLE FALLS N.Y.

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1811 — 1911

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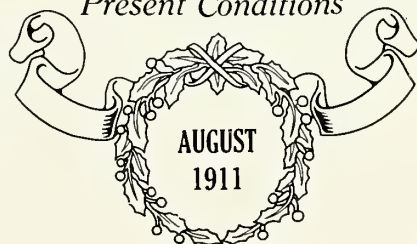






# DEVELOPMENT OF LITTLE FALLS

*A Brief Account of Conditions and Happenings which Compelled the Settlement  
and Development of this City, with some Reference to  
Present Conditions*



Compiled and Written for the Committee Organized to Celebrate the  
Hundredth Year of Corporate Existence Following  
the Charter of 1811

THE ART PRESS  
TIMES BUILDING  
LITTLE FALLS.  
N. Y. . . . 1911

# EXPLANATIONS

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THIS is a brief story of Little Falls' beginnings. Its scope is somewhat limited, even in the matter of details regarding the commencings of important subjects. It would be in vain to attempt to tell about all the features in Little Falls, however scant the mention. There are topics that deserve whole chapters, which are not given more than a passing word in some chapter on a related subject.

Yet within the limits which were necessarily imposed by the size of the book it was possible to get out, it has been possible to gather a large variety of facts which have been assembled into groups under chapter headings. It is believed that a better idea of the history of Little Falls can be had from this story than can be acquired from any other book published, although in some particulars other works contain a better view of certain subjects, as, for example, the biography of citizens of old.

The method of finding and writing the story was that used by newspaper men. The committee said it wanted a history of Little Falls, and the writers took various subjects to write about; Mr. Eugene Walrath, the Manufacture and Industries of Old; Mr. John B. Koetteritz, the Canals and Railroads; Mr. Raymond S. Spears, other subjects as they appeared in the search for facts.

Many sources of information suddenly opened to the searchers. There were so many, in fact, that the time element prevented taking advantage of them. There are living more than a score of men and women who recall vividly old time scenes, but unhappily it was not possible to interview all of them or even a quarter of them. However, there have been many interviewers in recent years, and a great deal of local anecdote has been preserved. Thus, Fire Chief Cooney has been collecting material facts about Little Falls for many years, and he has a great mass of facts which have been placed freely at the disposal of the collaborators.

The collection of autographs, books, and antiquities of Dr. John Hurley yielded many treasures of fact, and an interview with Mr. Charles L. Petree resulted in several effective passages—the story of the Octagon church Bible and of Johan Jost Petri, for example.

Mr. Watts T. Loomis and Mr. I. W. Haskins aided in giving vividness to conditions in the old days, and many others gave valuable hints in the preparation of the work.

Of the documentary evidence relied upon, Benton's Herkimer County, Harden's and Willard's Herkimer County, and the F. W. Beers & Co. history of Herkimer County gave the foundation from which to work. Mr. William Dise gave free permission to examine the large library of X. A. Willard, which he owns; the great store of

newspaper clippings gathered by Chief Cooney, Simm's Frontiersmen, Trappers, etc., George Clinton's Papers, manuscripts, maps, and reports, old newspaper files and the like have been used freely.

In the general story of the place, the invaluable knowledge possessed by Mr. Koetteritz has been frequently made use of, especially in the article on waterpowers, which is taken, as far as it goes, almost bodily from a paper read by him a few years ago before the Herkimer County Historical Society. Another of the Society's papers, that on Little Falls, read by Hon. Thomas Ferguson, proved of much value, as it represents original research in several particulars, while Gen. W. F. Lansing's paper on The Physical Development of Little Falls has been very useful in checking up statements of fact.

While it was hoped that it would be possible to bring the sequence of events down to the '80s, or within the memory of the middle-aged, so much was found that deserved emphasis, in the early days that it was believed a more satisfactory story would result if the very old times were described in detail, even though

interesting later years were sacrificed. Thus in matters prior to the Revolutionary War, during the Revolutionary War, in the days of the proprietorship of the Ellices, and immediately subsequent to the elimination of the Ellices there is much detail—more, apparently, than has been given in any other record.

Those who have local pride and spirit will find this story full of suggestions for individual research and compilation of facts of historical interest. There are materials for monographs on Little Falls amusements, canal developement, water power, schools (public and private,) firemen, dairying, water supply, Octagon church, place names, streets, as a carrying place, as a tavern town, and numberless other features.

It would be in vain to attempt to consider modern or even the almost modern features of the place. The story of the old time charters is hardly mentioned, and, of course, biography, save in the most incidental way, has found no place here—not but what there are many names that deserve conspicuous place in any story of Little Falls.

# THE RED MEN'S DAY

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Before any white man had seen the Mohawk river, the Indians on their journeys up and down the valley, whether on their way to "councils," meetings of Indian legislators—or on hunting and fishing trips, or merely visiting among their friends, would stop at "Ostenrogan", "Astenrogan", "Asteroga", as the falls were called, meaning Under the Rock, "Rocky Waters" (swift waters), etc. Another name, "Talaquaga", came from the small cedar brush, dwarfed on the stones.

If there was any Indian camp at the falls, it was a temporary one, established for sake of catching the suckers and salmon which gathered in the pools and eddies at the foot of the tumbling waters, when the spawning season was at hand.

A rough, rocky, gloomy place, wet underfoot from many springs, shaded by trees which grew where there was root hold among the broken stones, it was not a place to attract mankind. It was a place of hardship for the Indians on their journeys, for they were compelled to climb over the stones with their boats and packs on their way up or down the river. Doubtless, venture some souls among the Indians—as among the white men later—ran the falls in canoes, but it was not a common practice.

The waters of the Mohawk were a dark, swamp flow, like that of the Kayahoorá—the West Canada of today, but it was sweet, cold water, and one could drink from it anywhere, from its head spring to the brackish waters at the edge of the tide. It

was, without doubt, a most beautiful place, rugged and exciting the wonder of the red men and red women, whenever they came that way.

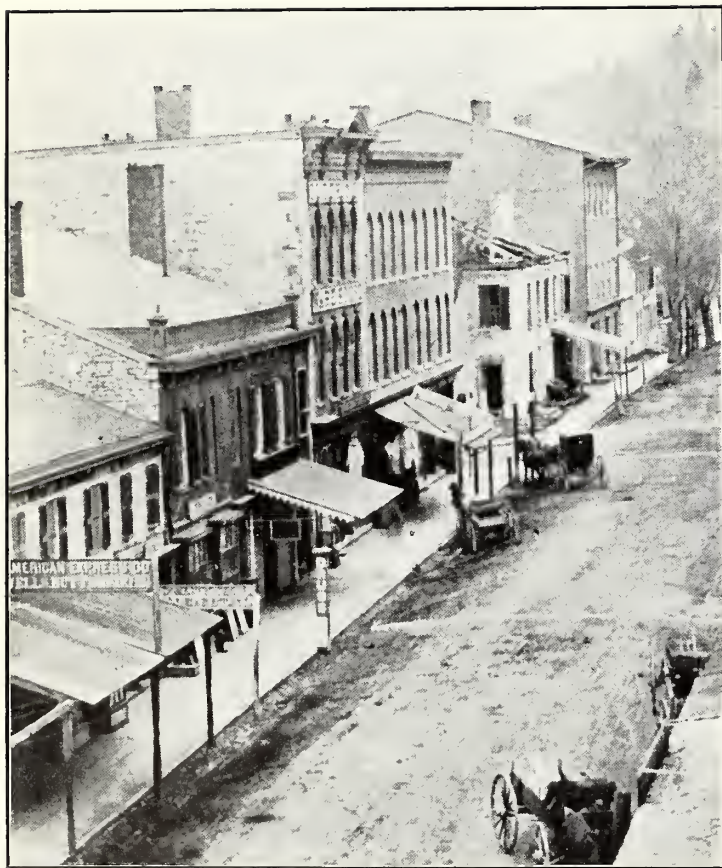
The red men who travelled on foot did not come through the Gorge. Their trails were back on the long ridge backs. If they came down to the stream to camp, fishing and clamming for muskels, it was over the points of the ridges, and they returned the same way. The Mohawk was a water highway, broken by the Cohoes Falls—the Big Falls of the Mohawk—and the Ostenroga—the Little Falls of today.

Who was the first white man to see the wild beauty of the gorge none have said. He was doubtless one of the New York Dutch fur traders, unless the traditional Norsemen of the year Thousand A. D., reported to have joined the Iroquois, came here.

When the Dutch yielded to the English, the English fur-traders came up the Mohawk and followed the trail around the falls over the ancient "carry" first used so far as known, by the Indians.

The scene here did not change much during the hundred years that white men visited the hinterland of the colonies, but occupation was foretold by the increasing number of fur traders who pressed up the Mohawk toward the Great Lakes, and the success of their rivals, the French from Montreal. That rivalry had a great deal to do with the settlement of Little Falls and the Upper Mohawk valley.





Far-sighted Englishmen foresaw war. Gov. Burnett occupied Oswego, and a little later, the French occupied Fort Niagara. In the meanwhile, the Palatine Dutch were seeking a refuge, for they were exiles.

It was at first proposed that the Palatines should settle "in the middle of our Indians," but to this the Palatines objected. They asked and received the right to purchase lands of the Indians, on condition that "they be noe nearer than a fall in the Mohocks river, which is forty miles from Fort Hunter, and four-score from Albany."

The English welcomed the Palatine Dutch to their American wilderness because it was hoped these exiles would serve as civilizers of the Indians, and they were permitted to settle on the outskirts of the English possessions because in case of war with the French and Indians, the tomahawks would fall first on the heads of the Palatines. They had for years been a source of difficulty and friction down on the Hudson.

The Palatines came up the Mohawk about 1723, and settled the valley from Little Falls upstream under a petition for a patent of land from the English, to confirm a grant of land granted by the Indians July 9, 1722. The Burnetsfield Patent—the English confirmation of the Indian grant—seems to have been a tricky document, for it merely allowed patches of land where the Indians had granted a solid body. This perhaps accounts for the elimination of Johan Jost Petri by the Ellices just before the Revolution.

In any event, it is said that a mill and two story house were built by Johan Jost Petri at Furnace creek in 1725—the Old Yellow House and Grist Mill of Little Falls history. There are faint glimpses of those pre-revolutionary days in Little Falls. Times were hard. The inhabitants suffered much. They were poorly

MAIN STREET FIFTY YEARS AGO.



housed, ill-clad and hungry. They came down to Little Falls looking for work at the Carry there.

The rich fur-traders coming up the Mohawk on their way to the fur lands of the wilderness West, hired extra men to carry their canoes, kegs of rum, beads and other trade goods around the falls—the little portage, some called it. The Indians had a monopoly of this business until the Palatines came, and they resented the competition, and there were fights which were the first labor difficulties in the Upper Mohawk valley. The rows did not develop into wars, however, being brawls over liquor and other wages.

Without doubt, the white packers built bark shacks or camps, and probably log cabins where they would have shelter while they waited for work to come, for the traders pressed up the river as soon as the ice was out, and the snow was still deep in the woods. The Indians, too, must have had shelters here, and so the obstacle in the Mohawk which made the fishing good at the foot of the falls, and which compelled the unloading of the canoes, was a prime cause for the settlement of the untillable rocks.

There was another reason for the settlement than the chunk of lead, the drink of rum, the horn of powder or pinch of salt which served as pay for the packing. There is no doubt that the settlers away back there in the wilderness were news hungry, and that people who did not have to eke out their livings, came to hear the news from the outside world which the traders brought up from the Hudson and New York.

So the obstacle, the little water power near the mouth of Furnace creek and longing for news must have been the prime reasons for the beginnings of a settlement at Little Falls.

## WHEN THE PALATINES CAME.

After the grant of lands to Johan Jost (Joost) Petri in 1722, it appears that part of the grant fell through, for in 1741, the islands in mid-stream at the falls—Hansen's, Seeley, Moss (?), etc., of today—were granted to Peter Winne. Then the south side lots, including Fall Hill, were granted to Johan Joost Hercheimer and Jurg Hercheimer (brothers), in the year 1752.

There were in those days, as in modern times, land grants whose rights conflicted, for the wilderness was much of it unsurveyed, and to this day there is much question when the effort is made to determine the limits of places, first settlements, etc., for purposes of historical record. Doubtless, conflict of testimony which investigators discover regarding the early days in Little Falls are due in large measure to the fact that there were no definite bounds to the place called "Fall Hill", "Little Falls", "Ostenrogan", "The Carry", etc.

As the English foresaw, the Palatines caught the brunt of the attack on the Frontier when the war with the French-Indians of Canada, long foreseen, came at last. Raid after raid was made, and on November 12, 1757, the French-Indian forces swept down both sides of the Mohawk and twenty buildings on the south, and eight on the north between the Falls and Herkimer were destroyed. The mill and yellow house at Furnace creek seem to have been missed, however, but there can be little doubt that the raid came to the city limits on the south side.

With the driving of the French from the American continent, the fur-trade from the English towns down the Mohawk and Hudson received a great impetus. The surrender of Quebec was signal for the rush of fur buyers, and the Carry at the Falls was a stand of

increasing importance. It appears that there had been a kind of toll charged there, or possibly a monopoly in the carrying. At least, it is a matter of record that on July 11, 1761, John Bradstreet, secretary to General Amhurst, wrote to Capt. Jost Petri, "or to his oldest son", as the address read, saying that his obstructing his Majesty's service at "Little Falls" and limiting the King's highway to eight yards breadth must stop. Moreover due notice was taken of Petri's threat to pull down a house erected by His Majesty. The redoubtable Petris were told "that if you do not immediately desist from such insolent behaviour he will treat you with the severity your crimes deserve." All this indicates that the spirit of freedom was strong at Little Falls.

This proves, too, that the king's representatives had provided a building for some purpose—perhaps for a garrison, or to shelter munitions and supplies for the forts farther west, and that there was a dispute regarding land titles and rights in Little Falls, since the carry and building privileges were valuable. Indeed, it would seem that the King had trespassed on lands claimed by Johan Jost Petri under that grant of 1722, by the Indians. By 1757 a wagon road had been cut along the north side of the river.

John Jost Petri, who figures also in the early days of Herkimer, was the leading merchant and land owner in the Gorge in those days. Unhappily, there is no way of discovering just when the first trader settled here, and began his traffic in supplies and furs and goods. There can be no doubt that the landings above and below the falls were places of barter from the beginning of white travel. Perhaps in those burned documents at the State capital was the answer to a thousand questions that arise in the historians' minds—but it is only a matter of speculation and surmise. Perhaps it is just as well if once in a while the records of the past are edited by fire—who can say?

At least Capt. Jost Petri was a forward citizen, a capable, fearless man who startled the minions of a meddling King by demanding rights and property to which he had sufficient claim. He even threatened to tear down the house of a trespasser, although that trespasser was the King himself. Nor does it appear that this sturdy old settler's point was ill-taken, for a few years later he was conveying his lands and property as though a King had never interfered with his peace and comfort.

There is no doubt that the Petri carry on the north side and the Herkimer carry on the south side were great rivals, and this rivalry led to much oral squabbling and even fisticuffs. The Herkimer carry was from the Adirondack Woolen mill, near the head of Moss island, to the feeder of the present Erie canal (about where the new barge canal leaves the Mohawk channel). The Petri carry was from opposite the Astorogan Rocks up to Main street of today, around the wet low land and the rocks, pot holes, etc., to opposite the head of Hansen's Island, at the entrance to the old Inland canal.

Doubtless there was much trade here, and the Old Yellow House, or its uncolored predecessor, was probably the first store. The first tavern may have been the old Vrooman place on the south side carry. There are many names missing in the roster of the beginnings in those days.

But while names are lacking, there are plenty of striking views presented of conditions here in those days before the War for Independence. One of them is in the diary of the surveyor, Isaac Vrooman, who came to Little Falls with Indian axmen in 1764, in the first survey of the Royal Grant. His Indians, having caught some martens and beavers along the way, sold the skins for rum—whereupon surveying ceased.

## IN THE REVOLUTION.

It is recorded in Simms' "Frontiersmen" that Adam Stauring, Henry Keller and John, Henry and Jacob Hoefer, brothers, "lived at Little Falls before the war." On the Fall Hill were Peter Ten Broeck, George Henry Bell, and Warner Dygert. Moreover, from this place, pioneers went out into the wilderness to make their homes, and without doubt, on their explorations seeking places to locate, the men left their families here while they prospected through the woods country.

Before the war broke, the settlers at Snyder's Bush and Fairfield had opened a wagon road that was "passable", and when war came the settlers from all the country north of Little Falls were ready to flee to the Falls. They purchased the things they had to buy here, and this was the trading station for the people, who, like Mount, Gordon, Skinner, Snyder, Williams, Lapham, Johnson, and many others, settled clear up to Mount's creek, Black Creek, Fairfield, Salisbury, etc. They came down here and gave their families the treat of a trip to town, and Mount was in Little Falls, trading, when his two children were killed in the early part of the war.

On the hills immediately north of Little Falls were Honicle Aucks, Conrad and Frederick Windecker, Bartholomew Pickert, John Keller, John Hadcock, John Garter, Joseph Newman, John Cypher, Helmer and Ritter. The home of Aucks was surrounded by a log-picket fence, and it was called "Fort Aucks".

There are many names associated with the history of Little Falls and its settlement, traffic and affairs immediately before the Revolution. These names it would be interesting to consider did time or space permit—but even the story of events must be skimped, for the place is rich in things that happened and things that were done.

There are many reminders of the part played by Little Falls during the War of the Revolution. There seem to have been two carries, one on each side of the river, and when the West Shore railroad, the Erie canal and other excavations were made, cannon balls were found, having been lost in transit. On the north side along the route of the inland canal of later years was that "King's Highway" between the Drummond Hole and opposite the head of what is now Hansen's Island, over which was carried supplies.

A winter road was kept open on the snow from Albany to the Forts that guarded the head of the valley, so that winter and summer there was a constant traffic through Little Falls, and the little town was an important station along the route.

A great deal is written about the raids on the Mohawk valley and the work of the fighting men in that region, but the good that the Mohawk valley patriots did was about balanced by the brutal crimes of the Tories who came with the Indians. In the strategy of the war, it is clear that only the Battle of Oriskany was of vital importance.

It was the men and women who planted and reaped the wheat, even though they bore no military titles, who were never absent from the thoughts of Washington and Congress. It was Mohawk valley wheat that insured the independence of the American states, and the little grist mill at Little Falls, grinding on after all the other mills above the Gorge were destroyed, and the inhabitants keeping the wheat moving down present a far more accurate picture of importance to the mind than the sporadic forays of Red Warriors and painted cowards shooting farmers and lugging women over the trail to Buck island. The great service of Little Falls was its





LITTLE FALLS IN 1827.

lugging at wagon, sled and boat cargoes, the up-bound laden with supplies for fort-protection, and the down-bound laden with wheat, oats, rye and the like.

In the sunset shadow of the mighty Gorge, however, lived Nicholas Herkimer, who remained true to the valley, though his wife, and people of his own kind fled with the Tory enemies, and he hurried through Little Falls settlement on his way to fight. The fight was made at Oriskany, rather than at the German Flatts forts because the crops stored there were essential to the existence of the American army protecting Albany.

When Jelles Fonda, the Mohawk valley commissary, was accumulating supplies at Fort Dayton for the army of defence against St. Leger, he paid Augustinus Hess ten pounds, nine shillings, for 8c. 2 qr. 15l b. of flour, "and riding the same two miles", over the Little Falls carry.

"On June 5th, 1778," Colonel Jacob Klock, in command, wrote Gov. Geo. Clinton: "I had not been three hours at Cachnawaga until I had an express that the enemy had broke in near Stone Arabia and appeared in the upper part of Palatine district near the Little Falls." On the following day he reported undoubted information that "a party of Indians were seen on the north side of the river nearly opposite the late General Herkemer's", which indicates the pine-grown point now called Burnt Rocks. Doubtless, time and again the scouts of the enemy lurked in the cedar thicket in the gorge, glaring down at the little mill, at the proprietor's house and at the little group of cabins which probably stood there, although the records are painfully deficient in descriptions of places.

Soldiers were on guard at the grist mill most of the time without a doubt, and gradually the hastening troops and volunteers on

their way to protect the inestimably important farmlands around German Flatts, wore a trail along the valley, from end to end, joining the carry road near the lower landing, and continuing past the upper landing. None can say when the first wagon followed the sleds—"mud boats"—over this trail, but the days of the Revolution saw the further development of Little Falls from a mere landing place into a more important hamlet on turnpike and river.

Time and again, raids came in sight of the Falls, as at Rheimsnyder's Bush, four miles to the north, while east and west the dark columns of smoke from burning cabins told of attacks and tragedy.

In June, 1782, there was a raid on Little Falls. It was inspired, doubtless, by the fact that after the destruction of the German Flatts mills this mill became of greater importance than ever. It was a night attack, and the people were surprised. There were nineteen men in the mill, according to Benton, ten who were waiting for their grists, two millers and seven Continentals—a sergeant and six privates.

The millers were Gersham Skinner and F. Cox; the farmers, Peter Wolleaver, Christian Edick, Frederick Getman, Marks Rasbach, John Rasbach, Thomas Shoemaker, Lawrence Hatter, Jacob Petrie, Daniel Petrie and Peter Orendorf. The enemy charged in out of the night, firing a few shots. Two of the soldiers escaped. Daniel Petrie was tortured till dead, and of the others who were captured, including four who hid in the water till the fire of the mill revealed them, some were borne away captives, some were, apparently, turned loose, and several escaped, including Skinner, who was badly wounded. The deep gulf, in which was an excellent spring of water, and where the cedars were very thick under the

tall timber, was the hiding place to which the Little Falls people fled on alarm that the Indians and Tories were coming.

There is evidence that Chief Brant looked down into the gorge from Fall Hill on the south side—at least during the war, he made captives on the fertile flat to the southward, while all the great patriot fighters came this way on their sometimes hasty trips up and down the Mohawk.

Perhaps there is no more curious fact in the history of Little Falls than its failure to send either reports or appeals to the men in command. From all sides couriers were sent hot-foot for help, with warnings, with tales of woe and fright, but apparently not once did any citizen of Little Falls add any burden to the heavily weighted Governor Clinton.

Like all the other places in the valley, Little Falls profited as well as lost in consequence of the war. If before the war there had been racial jealousies, fine feelings and much pride which kept the English and Palatines separated, following the war there could be no more question of racial eminence.

The coarse spirit which had suggested the use of an unfortunate people as an armor—as a buffer—against the invasion of cruel Indian bands, went out with the Tory exiles. In the breasts of the Tories, it beat itself into oblivion against the stalwart and undaunted Palatines, whom it had despised and maltreated.

In seven short years, the scattered, quarrelsome, self-seeking settlements of the valley learned to rush to the protection of one another, to labor for the common cause, to hold back the raiders on the one side while they sent their crops to the other side where they were more needed.

The man in the isolated clearings thought of his neighbors—one community thought of the other communities, and narrow-visioned selfishness gave way to self-sacrificing patriotism. Fighting blindly against local wrongs, the time came when the vision cleared, the weed-men were cast out and in the places that had been occupied by these worthless men were found Patriots, regardless of breed or previous condition.

Little Falls, in which was found that Capt. Jost Petri "obstructing His Majesty's service" as long before as 1761, could not fail to reap the reward that ever comes to the lot of a place whose citizens resist evil with vehement good heart, and no sooner was its grist mill in ruins at the end of the war than it was up and doing again.

#### THE USEFUL JOHN PORTEOUS.

The end of the Revolution found tens of thousands of men whose energy and thought had for seven years been unceasingly in the National service, overcoming the brutal attacks of a powerful enemy. That enemy was now gone, but all the energy and power of thought remained. There had to be some outlet for it, and the men who had been fighting, now turned to developing the resources of the continent.

In Little Falls, there were unrivaled opportunities for development. The river carry and the improving land highways would naturally in the course of time have compelled a tavern town here; now the people whose ambition had been stirred by the clamorous glory of war and the inspired effort of overwhelming patriotism, were equally stirred and inspired by the vision of developed water power, of trade, a wilderness swept back into the mountains. If for a time progress was prevented by the absence at the front of some of the sturdiest men of the community, and if in many places the



development was actually thrust back by the destruction of enterprises, as the burning of the mill at Little Falls, there can be little doubt that the gain in ambition, in capacity for work, in continuity and persistence due to a horde of healthy and relentless raiders was in large degree compensatory for the loss in property, if not in the loss of life.

In the last analysis, it will be found that it was an "obstacle in the river" that compelled a settlement at Little Falls, and it was the "obstacle" of a King's stubbornness that compelled war for independence, and it was the "obstacle" of the enemy that made the American soldiers stand erect and learn to think. The final "obstacle" was, curiously enough, the persistent refusal of the two Ellices to permit advancement.

Immediately after the Revolution, the Little Falls Settlement began to increase in size and importance. The location had attracted the favorable attention of many who had passed through the gorge to and from the scenes of warfare, or while engaged in the more profitable, financially, business of conveying wheat and other supplies down to the large cities, and to the armies.

There were hindrances to progress. The water-power rights, and some of the lands were held by Ellice by some unnamed title, who would not sell, and who surrounded his leases with such restrictions that few cared to attempt to develop them. It was not until 1789, for instance, that the old mill was rebuilt. But there seems to have been a gathering of the packers at the Falls, as of old, and conditions were ripe for the arrival of the man who has been called "the pioneer of Little Falls". Other men deserve the title better than he does, probably—that man Johan Jost Petri, who was impudent to a king, for example.

However, the useful John Porteous came to town in 1790. He was a Scotchman, who left Perth, Scotland, in 1761, to make his fortune in the wide world. He was an Indian trader in the vicinity of Detroit for about ten years, a fact that indicates his venturesome disposition, and then he came to New York, where he was in trade till 1783. He then invested in land in Nova Scotia, and in 1784, he returned to Scotland. He could not forget America, however, and his return to Scotland seems to have shattered his dreams of settling there, for the rest of his life. Doubtless, his memory recalled the gorge of the Mohawk and in 1790, he came here to settle down. He had joined himself with Alexander Ellice, and he was doubtless an agent of the Ellice trading firm.

Of Mr. Porteous it is said that he had the elements that made a man popular in a place such as Little Falls was at that time. He was not only a first class business man, but he was a good politician, as is shown by the fact that he was elected supervisor only a year after his arrival in Little Falls. Then, too, he had a fiddle, and no doubt he played it at numerous parties and dances, and if he didn't sit down before the fire in the store some nights when trade was dull, and play till the loungers patted Juba while the nimblest heeled jigged it, he was less kind and liberal than the traditions about him would indicate.

He was a first class, all-around man, this John Porteous. He "swore terrifically"—which was not unusual for leading citizens at that time—and he kept open house for the circuit riding parsons, and other notable people who came up and down the valley. Through them, and through the letters and occasional newspapers, and many books, he kept himself well informed and up with the times. Then he set toddies out for the parsons, and for other travelers to drink, and that he set a good table goes without saying. It is a pity that more is not known of him and his doings.



ENTRANCE TO OLD LOCK.

It is recorded that William Feeter, the only Patriot of the Lucas Feeter family, was ostracised by his Tory neighbors for his Americanism, and after splendid service in the Revolution, he settled in Little Falls town. He was long witness to the hardships due to lack of communication, and in 1797, he gave his 15 year old son, Adam Feeter, a good horse and saddle-bags, with the injunction to carry post and newspapers from Albany to Little Falls, and for three years the youth carried the mail—the first rural delivery up this far in the valley. He went nearly to Utica, and through the northern towns of the Royal Grant—possibly this indicates the hardihood of the old time Little Falls youth better than any other fact that has come down.

The enterprise and hardihood of the boy led to the postmaster general asking John Porteous if he would serve as postmaster at Little Falls, and he was appointed, according to the commission now in Dr. John Hurley's possession, on March 31, 1797—the first postmaster here.

While Porteous was shaping the political, social and trade destinies of the little Hamlet, that new mill—"The Red Mill", as it was called, worked on, the clink-clank-clunk of its huge wheel resounding along the cedar clad slopes, and more and more, people came through the town on turnpike and river. Traffic was tremendous. The work of porting the merchandise around the falls was so great that no sooner had Porteous come to town than were heard demands that a waterway be constructed around this obstacle to navigation, in order that the land transportation and ruinous transfer of goods from boat to wagon, and wagon to boat, be stopped—so came the first Mohawk valley canal, of which the story is told by Mr. Koetteritz in another part of this book.

But it is worth emphasizing that while the north side belonged to the Ellice estate, the south side, through inheritance, fell into



the hands, at last, of General Christopher P. Bellinger. The south side carrying privileges, long held in the Herkimer-Bellinger family, rivaled considerably, the north side carrying privileges. The result was that Alexander Ellice so far relaxed his policy of non-development as to join in by permitting right of way with the members of the canal corporation in the construction of the waterway for boats of three feet draft, or less. This, of course, hurt the south side property, but eventually, with the coming of the Erie canal, the south side came into its own again—a fact of which General Bellinger, with his ownership of south side power rights, was able to take full advantage.

#### AS IT WAS THEN.

It is possible to relate some features of the Little Fall's trade during the years just after the Revolution. It was a frontier town in some respects, for wilderness was only a short distance away. Indians, in picturesque costume, were seen frequently; trappers from the deep Adirondacks came down with their packs of furs, treading silently in their moose-hide moccasins; farmers brought in produce, much as they do to this day; there was always a market here for venison, and people still living recall when the hunters up Salisbury way brought in sled loads of deer carcasses and occasional bears, and other game; of course in the earliest days, moose meat was frequently on sale; home made baskets, ax helves, and similar articles, shoes, boots, fur hats, were made for trade and sale; the clothes of many people were the skins of animals; others wore home-spun, while a very few had imported cloth garments.

These things, which were brought in from the surrounding country, supplemented the far-famed crops of wheat, rye and oats which gave the Mohawk valley the name of "the granary of the

Revolution"—"of America." They were the "pocket money" of the community, so to speak, and they took most of the time of the tradesmen.

They were traded for powder and lead, tea, sugar, (though many farmers had sugar bushes), for the inevitable jug of rum, (which was supplemented by applejack, berry wines, hard cider, and sundry home made brews), for spices, imported dress goods for mein fraus' meeting dress, hardware, cutlery, tools, wrought iron, etc.

The staples imported were rum, molasses, cloth, salt, iron, lead, crockery, and the like. In return, was sent the grain, furs, cattle, cheese, timber, and other products of the region around.

This trade was carried on largely by swapping. A trapper traded his furs for powder, lead, bullet molds, salt, rum and other necessities. The farmer paid the cost of grinding grain for flour and meal in tolls—and he paid his store and tavern bills with things he raised on his farm. The beaver skin, reckoned at three dollars, was a standard of currency. To this day, the site of the Skinner opera house pays the city an annual rental of a beaver skin, or its equivalent.

The Rollway is a memory of the days when the Fall Hill and the region back of it was heavily timbered. The trees were cut, hauled to the top of the Rollway—the ancient and better term of what loggers now call "the dump"—and slid and rolled down to the foot of the bluff and thence they were "snaked" to the sawmill, which was built no one seems to know when, nor where. The timber was exchanged for things needed on the farm.

William G. Milligan used to tell his relatives about the sugaring off on the Stauring farm (of today) just behind the Rollway. He

used to go up in sleighs to the bush, with a crowd of other youngsters, to gather around a huge sap kettle boiling among the great maples. When the syrup began to thicken a patch of clean snow in the edge of the woods was packed down hard, whipped with poles and then smoothed off. Then, as the syrup waxed, dippers and buckets full of it were scattered over the hard snow, and the young people—the old and the middle-aged, too—would pick up lumps on sharp sticks, on their fingers and any way to get it, eating till they could eat no more.

There was another traffic in Little Falls. This place was a slave mart, and some of the settlers in this city owned slaves—"black boys"—and on the farms surrounding the city were found negroes who had been imported direct from Africa in slave ships that were owned, in part at least, by local tradesmen. One may find that the Mohawk valley wheat was taken down to the sea, exchanged for African trade goods, and the equivalent in negroes brought back. The climate, however, was too rigorous for the tropic-bred people, and slavery was unprofitable. The importation of bondsmen—people from Europe, who to get to America, sold themselves for a term of years in exchange for passage—of bondswomen, and of apprentices was common enough, and the old time newspapers contain advertisements proving this, long after the year 1800. There is a faint tradition to the effect that Indian girls were bought and sold here for some time after the Revolution, being voluntary slaves or captives brought in by warriors who had taken them in tribal raids to the westward.

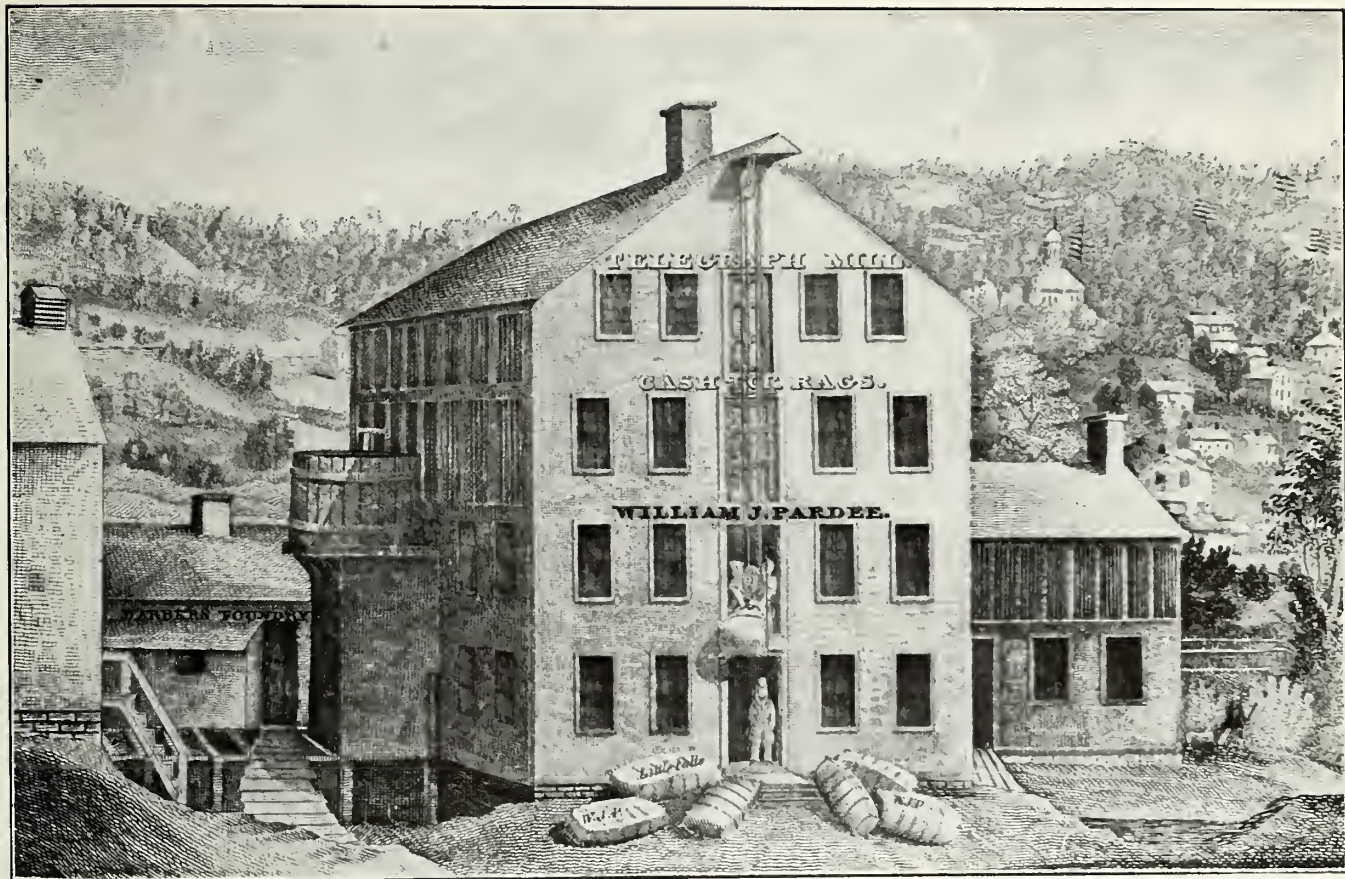
It is difficult, in looking back at those old records, listening to the faint echoes that show conditions of that time, to reconcile the conditions then with the conditions now. Perhaps the best way of writing history would be to begin in the present time and work backwards, showing the changes from the near side. Certainly, few

natives of Little Falls at that time would know how to act on Main street now, nor would they recognize many of its features. They would have to be told where they were. The river, the sides of the valley, the appearance and habits of the people, the buildings, the very language have all grown up out of their ancient conditions. The ordinary good citizen of this day translated into the Little Falls of 1790 with his sense of justice unimpaired, with his standard of morals, with his civic spirit, with his intelligence and knowledge of the Twentieth Century—even eliminating all the inventions and material progress—would be reckoned a paragon of virtue.

Sobriety was practically unknown in the Mohawk valley at that time. The parson, his wife and all his children were generally heavy drinkers—and they were known to be good people because they were moderate where others were immoderate and licentious. This accounts for the fact that rum was the great staple of import. It would startle most people if some mathematician would reckon what proportion of the Mohawk valley wheat crops—most famous crops of their day in the new world—went to the payment of rum debts.

In the river traffic, there were, in 1807, three kinds of cargo carriers; the Schenectady boat, which was round-bottomed, sharp at one end, 45 feet long and eight wide, and had a capacity of ten tons, the Durham boat, round-bottomed, 30-35 feet long and eight feet wide; and the scow Batteau, which reached a size of 30 feet length or more.

The Schenectady and Durham types were poled up the stream, the crew of from two to nine men having running boards on the sides of the boats. They set their poles—pikes, 18 to 22 feet long, on the bottom at the bow and walked aft, running forward and re-





peating. They set sails when the wind was right, and they made 18 to 25 miles in a day. The ten-ton carriers were compelled to wait for high water.

The Batteaus were row-boats, with from two to four pairs of oars.

In competition with the river navigators, even in summer, were great wagons, drawn by from three to eight horses, or oxen. In winter the sledgers carried all the goods and products that were sent.

Down the river floated logs and lumber. Lumber was rafted from Nobleborough, over Trenton Falls, and down the Mohawk to this place.

The men of that day were Titans in strength and like Hercules in endurance, and in the crowds who came to town were Indians, their squaws and little children. The bitter antagonism still embittered the spirits, and there were murders along the roads and trails after visits to town—brutal vengeance often with no other excuse than that in war there had been able fighting by raiding enemies.

There is a description of the town in 1802, written by Rev. Caleb Alexander.

"Around Little Falls", he says, "the country is very hilly and very rocky near the river. On the northern bank are seven locks and a canal for the conveyance of boats. Here is a village of forty houses, several merchant stores, mechanical shops and a new meeting house of hexagonal construction. The people are principally English, and they seldom have preaching. The place abounds in

vice, especially profanity. Since my arrival on the river I have heard more cursing and swearing, horrid oaths and imprecations than in ten years past. They fell chiefly from the lips of boatmen. In some taverns were English and Dutch farmers, drinking and swearing, and the English appeared to be the more abandoned. They regard not the presence of a clergyman, for the dominie drinks and swears as much as the common people".

Certainly, Little Falls was a lively frontier town!

### THE GRIP OF THE PROPRIETORS.

Alexander Ellice, an Edinburgh, Scotland, business man, obtained through his friend, Sir William Johnson, large land interests in the Mohawk valley. He obtained in this way, or through Sir John Johnson, title to lots 12 and 13 of the Burnettsfield Patent on the north side of the river, reaching from the Upper to the Lower landing, and the "Stripe" covering much of the good land below the gorge. That Capt. Jost Petri, who defied the king, was in some manner eliminated from his mill on Furnace creek, and from his carrying business between the landings, presumably by the unfair means of political pull.

Ellice, during the Revolution, fled to England, but committed no known overt acts bringing him under the Acts of Attainder by which were outlawed the enemies of America, who could not influence their patriot friends to save their property to them. After the Revolution, he returned to America, and, as has been seen, installed John Porteous as his Little Falls agent.

Ellice was of that peculiar temperament long glorified as "shrewd", and the story of Little Falls from the day he took possession of the Little Falls lands to the day when his holdings were

wrenched out of his hands by a gang of grafting politicians, who were not without some public spirit—in 1831—is the story of this man's grasping, narrow-minded selfishness.

His agent, Porteous, was a popular man, and managed his business with profit for him. Through Porteous, he refused to sell an inch of land. If a man wished to use the water power of the river, the terms were that Ellice get a large and constant income from the project. If a man built a house along the carry, he had to pay rent for the land. If any enterprise was contemplated, the first question was, would it interfere with Ellice? No store could be built, no mill erected, no business carried on without it was first shown or provided in the lease that no precious penny in the pocket of the absent proprietor would be compelled to sweat. The result was that Little Falls was held down for fifty years, at least.

The days of John Porteous, who died March 20, 1799, were interesting ones. The few glimpses had of him and of his times awaken the curiosity and longing to know him better than we do. Some thirty or forty years ago, his papers, accounts, letters and other records were stored somewhere around Little Falls. They took up much space in a room. They fell into the hands of some bright and thrifty person, who saw a chance to turn these old documents into something useful, on the one hand, and rid certain space of an encumbrance. All those records were sent to a paper-rag mill, and for all time interested people have been saved the unnecessary trouble of burdening their minds with the information they contained. Little Falls has lost a great deal in this way, at one time and another.

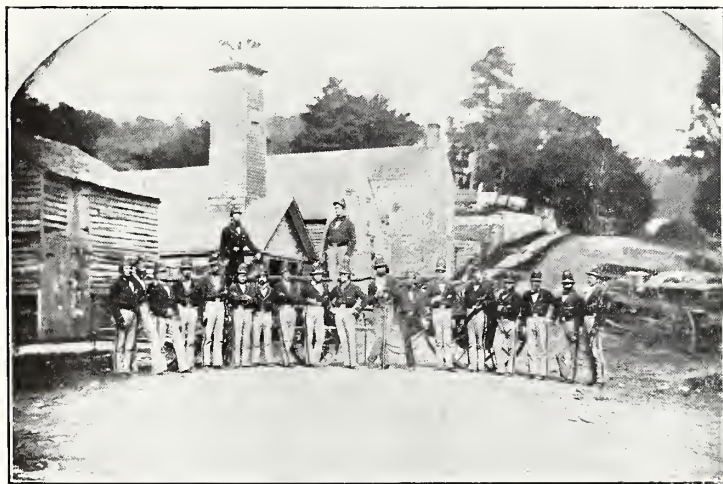
Soon after Porteous moved into the famous Old Yellow House, just west of Furnace creek, near the site of the grist mill, which

had been burned down in 1782, there was a growth of the town which compelled the erection of a church. The site selected was on the point of a ridge visible from all parts of the gorge, on the Fairfield road, now called Church street. The design was strikingly picturesque, with the result that the Octagon church is the most famous building ever erected here.

All travelers stared at it with interest, while the people regarded it with a kind of affection, the greater, now that what is called "the hand of modern improvement" has been permitted to destroy it. The building committee consisted of Dr. James Kennedy, William Girvan and John Dygert. The master builders were Joseph Dorr and William Loveland; the workmen were Daniel Dale, James Dorr, Benjamin Carr, Sanford Pierce, James Sanders, and Martin Easterbrook; the apprentices were Robert Wharry and William Haddock; the pastor, Rev. Hezekiah N. Woodruff. John Porteous, Abraham Neely, Nicholas Thumb and Henry Klock, esquires, were the prime movers in the project. The architect, and the man who suggested the site are unnamed, though they were the inspired genii of the church. The work was not all done at once; in fact, the final hammer stroke was not wielded till the year 1818. It had a "lofty pulpit", a "singing gallery" and pews. It was often called "The Pepper Box" because of its shape.

Tradition says that when some itinerant parson came along with a call to preach, some one who could blow the four-foot horn went with him to the church and sounded the summons. Few could wind that horn, for it required great lungs and a certain labial and lingual facility not within the gift of every one. Schoolmaster Case, too, used that horn in calling his pupils. Very likely, it is kicking around in the woodshed or garret of some one who would be glad to swap it for some nice new talking machine. At least, it has departed with the church.

There are glimpses to be had of Little Falls in the days of its boyhood, so to speak. People who traveled up and down the river did not fail to mention Little Falls in their diaries and memoirs. There were some who admired the great beauty of the place, some who saw its magnificent power opportunities (and took sly whacks at the possessor thereof because he was shrewd), some who mentioned the "four or five hundred inhabitants" with respect, some who said the local parson drank at the tavern, and swore fluently,



OLD NO. 1 FIRE COMPANY AND HEADQUARTERS,  
GARDEN STREET.

and so on through the whole category of historical preservation. The enterprise which dug the Western Inland Canal around the falls was highly commended, but the "paralyzing policy" of that shrewd proprietor was observed and condemned because it throttled the enterprise and bled the industry of the struggling little town.

In 1808, Alexander Ellice died, and the property fell to the hands of Sir Edward Ellice, his son, who bought up the rights of the other heirs. Sir Edward occasionally visited Little Falls, on his way to look after the Northwest and Hudson Bay companies, in which he had large interests. He was wealthy, a member of parliament, and lived in England. His succession brought no relief to the settlement.

The public life, and much of the private life in Little Falls during the years from 1800 to 1827, was a struggle to be rid of the alien grip of the foreign and unsympathetic "proprietor". There can be little doubt that the charter which was granted to the settlement on March 30, 1811—just a hundred years ago—was an attempt of the residents to gain something against the nearly absolute rule of the man who would sell nothing and who demanded exorbitant rents where he did not absolutely forbid improvement.

The story of the village after incorporation may now be told.

### THE TWO GREAT CHARTERS.

The charter of 1811 was granted by the state legislature. It provided for the selection of trustees who were to be empowered with the right to make rules, by-laws and enforcement of the same. A glimpse of the conditions existing is had in the fact that the trustees were forbidden to fix the prices of any other commodities than bread. This can mean only one thing; the proprietor, who had

forbidden any one to open stores to compete with his own, was keeping the expense of living so high that people could hardly live here, and he was able to prevent the village people from exercising any control over his exorbitant profits.

It is a curious and interesting little hint, this line in the village charter. It reveals to every one who is familiar with practical politics, a story of conflict and effort and struggle, not only here in the gorge of the Mohawk, but down at Albany in the state legislature, where, it needs no great imagination to see, was the smiling, capable suave legislative agent of Sir Edward Ellice, quietly inserting little jokers in the charter which, with deadly certainty, bound the hands and feet of the bitterly struggling little community, while for more than a dozen years the proprietor's other agents plucked its pockets by unfair profits over the counter, by exorbitant rents, and by canny charges of other sorts.

If any one is inclined to question the progress of Little Falls, this glimpse into the conditions of the time when the first village charter was granted should be a revelation. The charter, which was to be the protection of the public against unfairness appears to have utterly failed in its purpose. The trustees could prevent an over-charge on one commodity, bread. It had other powers—but of what avail were they? The proprietor owned everything, and the people were renters—nothing more. They without doubt had to vote the proprietor's ticket or suffer the consequences—dispossession, discharge from place, and even violence.

One will search in vain for the public village records of that time. They are all gone, if there ever were any. It is doubted whether anything was ever done under this charter. It is clear, however, that the village charter was no relief to the place. It had in 1801, "forty houses, several merchant stores, mechanical shops,

and a new meeting house of hexagonal construction". In 1816, it was no larger. The time had long been ripe for an unrivaled development of the opportunities at the water fall, but mere political business had succeeded in shackling the strength of the people, and in spite of their struggling they had not yet learned the ways of politics well enough to defeat the evil that had locked them in. But they were learning.

Little Falls was held back for years by the Ellice proprietorship. Ellice reaped all the income and profit during those years, and it is clear from the records that many men who would have been glad to establish enterprises here did not feel secure from trickery or sharp practice if they took leases instead of the desired deeds, for it appears that in those times it was considered good business to ensnare men into unprofitable deals with the result that all men were exceedingly cautious.

There is a universal law of compensation, which seems to be enforced at times, and the time came when Sir Edward Ellice's policy of repression and profit was outgrown by the public. The people simply wouldn't stand for it any longer. Not without a kind of shrewd foresight, attempts were made, too late, to propitiate the angered inhabitants, not only of Little Falls, but of all the state, for the conditions here affected the great traffic up and down the valley from the rich lands in Western New York, from the Great Lakes and beyond. The policy of obstruction affected every trader, boatman, farmer and worker.

About 1820, permission was granted to erect a fulling mill, and in 1824 to build a paper mill, and in 1825, some leading politicians were permitted to purchase outright a few choice dwelling sites. These sops, however, were in vain.



The great state enterprise, the Clintonian Erie canal, was completed, and Ellice made another effort to hang on. The canal was along the south side of the river, and there was already a marked rivalry between the north and south sides. There was so much complaint that a harbor, where Clinton park is now, on the north side was provided for, the aqueduct was built over the Mohawk, and the jealousies alleviated. Ellice gave the lands and stone for the construction of this harbor and water-way bridge.

The people of Little Falls had at last learned to play politics against great wealth. The cupidity of a number of leading politicians induced them to become interested in the condition of affairs at Little Falls. It was agreed that the conditions were shameful, and the legislators were prevailed upon to grant the village of Little Falls a new charter. In this charter, the trustees were given powers to open new streets at the expense of the land owners. Ellice began to sell lands immediately, but not the water powers.

The next step was taken when in 1831, the legislators having been shown what there was in it for them, were prevailed upon to introduce laws that would prevent an alien landed proprietor from collecting rents, a native agent from collecting rents for such a proprietor, or such a proprietor from leasing lands, or conveying them except in fee simple. Great was the alarm of the landed proprietors of the kind described, and shortly, Ellice was prevailed upon to sell outright his holdings in Little Falls. State senators and others of influence combined to make the purchase, and the combination re-sold the rights, with alacrity, to individuals and companies and at last, after more than fifty years of effort and contriving, Little Falls came into its own.

Of course, wrongs and contests of this kind do not fail to leave behind them some memory, some scars of a kind. There are many

recollections of the Ellices, and probably none is more interesting than the beaver skin, or its equivalent, three Spanish milled dollars, which is paid to the city by the Skinner opera house site because in the shuffling of the perpetual leases, this rent did not happen to be extinguished after the proprietor was driven out by the shrewd and efficient politics of the late '20s and early '30s.

## FIREMEN AND PEACE-MAKERS.

The problem of fires, always a most serious one in a settlement, resulted in many interesting rules and regulations in the early days of the Little Falls. The first recorded fire was when the Indians burned the grist mill, but there may have been others in the little cabins of earlier date.

A fire company was incorporated in 1808 by Captain Solomon Lockwood, and a fire engine was purchased. It was a "goose-neck"—a nozzle through which water was pumped from a tub into which water was poured from buckets. It was guaranteed, provided not more than fourteen men worked at it. There was a fire on March 5, 1811, in Craine's tavern, and the roll-call after the fire gives the names of the volunteers in No. 1 company, as it was called: Solomon Lockwood, Captain; Rufus Sawyer, Amos Parkhurst, Josiah Hazen, Isaac Stevenson, Felix Dutcher, Josiah Perry, Thomas Battle, Benjamin Carr, Thomas Gould, Henry Prye, Benjamin Bowen, John O. McIntyre, Matthias B. Fellows, Thomas Smith, William Girvin, Brayton Buckland, John Brotheroe, John Phillips, Washington Britton, George W. Angel, Charles Hinkley, William T. Dodge, Henry Holmes, James Battle and George Plato.

Under the charter of 1811, every householder was compelled to have a fire bucket always in the hallway or beside the natural exit. If he was married, he had to have a bucket for his wife, and all the



adults were required to have buckets, ready for the fire. Then, when the alarm was given, all the inhabitants physically able and of age were required to repair at once to the scene of fire. The men formed a line from the nearest cistern or other water supply, along which the full buckets of water were passed along to the fire. The women passed back the empty buckets, and this bucket brigade many times proved its great efficiency in time of fire peril. The law as regards buckets was strictly enforced, for in 1835, it is noted that a number of people were fined \$1 for each day they did not have the buckets as required.

The water supply is in many ways wound up with the matter of fire protection. The first of the water supplies was from springs, then from wells and cisterns. Before the year 1800, a private company was organized to pipe water along the streets, and there were private pipe lines to the better residences, and taverns, in the early part of the last century.

When the charter of 1827 was granted, at an election held in the Stone school house, which still stands, Robert Stewart, Jacob Abcon and John Phillips were elected fire wardens—May 29, 1827. On June 14, the village laws, under the new charter, included rules for preventing and extinguishing fires. These included a stringent bucket law, chimney cleaning and premise clearing regulations. The fire wardens were to make monthly inspections.

Then, on June 16, two nights later, the first fire company was organized, and this was one of the greatest of social events in the village. The officers were Captain William Girvan, First Assistant Captain John Phillips, Second Assistant Captain Amos Parks, and Firemen Josiah Lockwood, James Sanders, Gould Wilson, Robert Stewart, Robert Lockwood, Andrew Oliver, Eliph Case, Charles

Hinchman, William Talcott, Charles Ellis, Anthony E. Fatan, Robert Stewart, 2nd, John Smith, Charles Smith, Alexander Ingham, Moses Drake, I. Hodgskin, Nate Esterbrooks, Thompson Parks, James Schuyler and Joseph Colvin. Twelve buckets were purchased.

Three years later, when political conditions showed an upheaval, the department was reorganized, and many of the firemen dropped and a new company organized. There were many things that made the firemen conspicuous. In the first place, their work was heroic, and as it was political, it was a sign of political importance to be a fireman. There were no clubs in those days, and the men getting together led to events—some for the fun of it, and some to raise money in order to get equipment, uniforms and other things. These firemen affairs became the chief social events of the year, and when on May 6, 1834, the board of trustees appointed a fire company for the South Side, and there were two companies in the village, there grew up a healthy and stimulating rivalry. Zenas C. Priest was made captain, Thomas Y. Petrie and J. F. Matterson, assistants.

Public spirited citizens gave lands, material and labor for the erection of fire houses, and the village gave contracts for the putting in of cisterns and reservoirs where they would be of most avail in case of fires. The parks held reservoirs, long hose was bought, and alarms of bells devised. On September 4, 1834, the Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 was organized.

So great was the honor of belonging to a fire company that private companies were organized, as the General Herkimer company, which had its own apparatus, uniforms, blow-outs, etc. Their engine, the General Herkimer, was a noted one.

When the huts in which the railroad and canal employees lived near the east end of John street were deserted for homes on the

Burwell lands, once in a while some one would start a fire in one of the shacks, an alarm would be sent in, and the companies would get a run—which was what was wanted.

The rivalry between local companies extended to the neighboring places, and the great firemen's conventions were leading events in the valley history. It was the firemen who demanded water, and yet more water, and the great water-works system of Little Falls can be traced back to the suggestions of such chiefs as Victor Adams in 1880, who showed that the water supply was utterly inadequate.

The good that the volunteers did, however, was spasmodic, and the time came when the exactions of the service were too great, and the paid department, with a few trained men ready at all times for instant service, was inevitable. Yet one cannot fail to mention the days when the hand engines "doubled" to throw water from Main street to a fire on top of Church street hill—to the fact that the steam engine—jeered at first by the strong-armed volunteers—came in 1870, and to the old time prize contests. The first hand engine Goose Neck cost \$250, the steam engine not more than \$3,000, and now a \$450,000 water-works system gives pressure at every hydrant sufficient for the paid department and its corps of call firemen.

It is nearly impossible to tell the story of the Little Falls peace preservers—the police force. In the beginning, the king's sheriff was in control, and the first business he had here was keeping track of that Johan Jost Petri in the matter of crowding the king's highway, for there is little doubt that the threatening letter was brought by a representative of the law.

The Revolution was followed by a period of lynch law enforcement, for Tories were driven out of the country, Indians killed, and undesirables "moved on", but gradually the law came, and with the

United States constitution, the settlement of state jurisdiction, and the appointment of local peace officers, the demand that every man look out for himself passed away.

There is, of course, a criminal story in the history of Little Falls. Murders, train robberies, a famous bank robbery, assaults, highway robberies, and various deeds of violence are recorded in the old time newspapers, and from these might be compiled a police record from which some valuable deductions might be made. Criminals always had a hard time to get away from Little Falls, and a long series of violent deeds were followed by swift retribution.

Deputy sheriffs and constables were the early peace makers, and then came the town marshals, and the police. It is only in recent years that successful attempts were made to take the fire and police departments out of politics. In the old days, all such matters as law enforcement, public office and court were often swayed by base men who tricked the scales of justice to the advantage of thief and scoundrel, and to the disadvantage of all honest men. There were dark days when the men set to catch thieves, helped thieves escape and shared in the booty—when behind the seat of justice crouched politicians fixing the machinery of courts, and no voice was raised against the practice. Happily, the city of Little Falls has outgrown these things. Those who think that times have not advanced in Little Falls would do well to read the records of those old days when the politician's chief asset was blackmail, as his strongest allies, unconscionable thieves.

## THE FARMS.

There is no greater fact in the story of Little Falls than its dairying and farming record. In 1832, when the indignant residents of Little Falls were voicing their protests against the politicians—





the same gang that blackmailed the Ellice proprietorship out of existence—because they would not permit the founding of a bank here—cheese was the first of the products of Little Falls. It was most important of the \$200,000 exports every year.

The Palatines and their descendants were great farmers and cattle raisers. There were none better anywhere, and for more than a hundred years the Mohawk valley farmers maintained their eminence in the supply of, first quantities of produce, and then in fine qualities of produce.

From this section came the famous Mohawk valley Yankee cheese, and before the Civil war, even, the Little Falls dairying improvements were watched wherever dairying was progressive. The Little Falls quotations for butter and cheese decided the prices in New York, Boston and other great markets. They were printed in all the papers of the country. Just as, in the days of the Revolution, Mohawk valley wheat occupied the minds of the commissary departments of the armies, so in the Civil war the valley products occupied a large place in the commissary of that day.

In October, 1842, butter sold at 10 cents, beef 2 cents and cheese 6 cents a pound, eggs 10 cents a dozen, flour \$4.25 a barrel, hay \$5 a ton, lard 8 cents a pound, oats 15 cents a bushel, pork 3 cents a pound, potatoes 15 cents a bushel, salt 94 cents a barrel, wheat 75 cents a bushel, wood \$2.50 a cord, tow cloth 15 cents a yard, wool (best) 32 cents a pound, corn 40 cents a bushel, buckwheat 38 cents a bushel, sperm candle 35 cents a pound, tallow moulded candles 11 cents a pound, and dipped 9 cents a pound.

During many years Monday was market day in Little Falls. The farmers drove to town, bringing thousands of dollars worth of produce which they exchanged for goods or sold for cash. In these days the buyers met the farmers on the street. From 300 to 350

tubs of butter were often brought in on a Monday, and great was the competition to get the farmers' trade. The canal and railroad carried away the produce, cheese and butter. A line of boats was established for the carrying trade between Little Falls and New York, making regular trips.

The years of 1859, 1860 and 1861 showed a tremendous increase in the exportation of cheese and butter to Europe—from 2,494,000 pounds of butter and 9,287,000 pounds of cheese to 23,159,000 pounds of butter and 40,041,000 pounds of cheese—and Little Falls shared in this. Herkimer county produced 1,251,872 pounds of butter and 10,901,522 pounds of cheese—more than twice as much cheese as its nearest rival. All this and more, came through the Little Falls market.

In the beginning of farming, when William Dale came from New Bedford, the Mohawk valley farmers heard with wonder that he was spreading manure on the land. They came to watch him do it, and jeered him for his pains. Those who wanted to know why, he told of the use of fish down east to maintain the fertility of the soil. They laughed at him, asking if he thought the land wore out. Not till the wheat crops failed, till the other crops wore out, till the land soured, did those old time farmers learn even a little of the lesson of the need of fertilizing, and the decline of Little Falls as a farming center may be dated from the loss of fertility of the soil which made it harder and harder for the farmers to make a living off the land which was worn out. Only in recent years has the importation and use of fertilizers once more renewed the promise of the place as an ever-increasing mart for dairying products.

It is worth recalling that in the old days when the butter did not come, the trouble was ascribed to witches, and a horseshoe was heated hot and dropped into the churn. That scorched the shins of

he witch so that she could not continue her nefarious practices. If a hog or horse had the staggers, it was scalded to death. All the cooking glasses, the farm implements, the furniture, and the like were marked with the witch-mark—something like a figure "4". The farmer slept with a steel square under his bed for protection, and there were frequent witch meetings to cure the bewitched. Spiritualism, trances, haunts, ghosts—a thousand grim guesses were made and rites practiced to make the crops come and the blights depart.

It is a curious fact that there was a barn built over the noted Linman hole so that the manure from the cattle could be thrown into it, and the old time owner of the place was rather proud of that barn, because he could so easily dispose of the "waste". Now, on a nearby farm, the owner gives the tenant all the fertilizer he will put on, and there is one place which is being renewed at the rate of about a hundred wagon loads of manure to the acre—and this means that Little Falls is forging to the front in the matter of farming.

One cannot leave the subject of Little Falls farming without mention of X. A. Willard, who was for many years one of the best known writers on agriculture in America. His writing on the subject seems to have been considerably more advanced than his practice in farming, but he did do much to make the fame of Little Falls as a dairying center secure. In the reports of the New York Agriculture society, in the volumes of the Country Gentleman and Rural New Yorker are preserved the invaluable records of the farming at Little Falls, its progress, difficulties, inventions and successes. No man in the story of the place is more deserving of a monument than he is, if the fame of the farming industry which centered at this place is worthy of a memento.

## THE WATER POWERS.

In all the story of Little Falls, the roar of the cataract, the clanking of mill wheels, and, in the later days, the whirring of the turbines are constantly in evidence. If, in the beginning, the falls were a disturber of navigation, in the later days they were the natural blessing of the place. Without the fall, there would have been no settlement in the gorge. So the story of Little Falls is necessarily a history of the water power here.

The trouble which the public had in wresting the political control of the falls from the proprietor who cared not one whit for the general good—who was so short sighted that he did not see the vast benefit that would come to his pocket if he would permit a division of profits that would insure the enterprising a reward for industry equivalent to the reward for mere wealth—has been in some measure described and characterized.

Trouble did not cease with the possession of the falls in the hands of citizens. In fact, from that time began the difficulties which enterprise must always overcome in its progress. There was so much power in sight that no one user could develop it all—supposing any one person could have secured control under the circumstances.

When the Inland canal was constructed, the survey showed that there was a waterfall of 44 feet, 7 inches, to be overcome by the locks. Of this, about forty feet has been developed by three dams.

The first diversion of water from the river was to supplement the waters of Furnace creek, and this Furnace creek power right has come down to the old Sheard mill, where the water is still used. From Lock Island (now called Hansen) on the north side a dam was probably built to throw the water into the old Inland Naviga-

tion canal. Here is the state dam of today. On the south side of this island was the old Bellinger dam, which fed the old time Bellinger mill race, and which now is the Erie canal feeder.

Below this was the middle dam, feeding twenty-two powers, according to the Powell map—occupied by the Kingston paper mill in recent years. The third dam is the Gilbert-Loomis weir. There was another dam just below the Gulf Bridge, which can be traced on the bottom to this day, which was built by Richard Ray Ward for creating low-head, large-volume water powers below.

In the early days, the need of accurate water measurements had not been felt. The stream flow, regulated by the wilderness on the headwaters of every feeder was very steady, the variation between high and low water being, compared with later days, very slight. The forests acted as a storage reservoir, but in time the woods were cut away. Low water became lower, high water grew higher, and a long series of litigations followed.

An instance of the uncertainties in the old grants of power rights may be seen in that of Christopher P. Bellinger to A'anson Ingham in 1826, "for the sole purpose of erecting a carding machine, fulling mill and turning lathes, and no other or different machinery or purpose whatsoever, excepting water enough for a grist mill, with two stones and a slit mill, on the south side of the river.

This does not tell how much water was conveyed, but it reserves all the water except what was sold to Ingham. In 1827, Bellinger sold power sufficient to run a paper mill, and surplus to run a grist mill and a plaster (rock) mill—the power to be used for no other purpose—Sprague and Dann being the purchasers. This business failed, and on foreclosure was sold to Robert and George A. Bartow, who in addition received a deed from Bellinger. In 1828,

Bellinger sold water rights to William J. Pardee, "sufficient for the mill" then being erected. Pardee might change the kind of mill, except that he must not run a saw or grist mill, "to grind for customers". Bellinger reserved the right to the water below the Pardee power.

Then there was a distillery run by Moses Drake at the west end of the present Rockton mill, which used power, but whether an independent wheel or from the adjoining grist mill became a matter of controversy.

Finally, Bellinger, in 1829, sold all his remaining rights below his sawmill to Arphaxed Loomis, who, in 1831, sold rights to Milton D. Parker of Utica. The problem which eventually had to be determined by courts and the hydraulic engineers was the rights that had been retained, the rights conveyed and the amount of water due to each holder of these various rights. The complications which grew out of the uncertainty in the original conveyances were further complicated by changes in the actual water flow, for as the low water mark grew lower and lower, the water powers became pinched—there was not enough water to go around, and the amount that could be fairly taken under each power right inevitably became subject for the judgment of the courts.

There were other complications, sales of rights, rights retained privileges, exceptions, etc., but enough has been given to indicate to lay minds why, in the course of time, the question of power at Little Falls became the subject of honest dispute among the holders of the privileges, and why it was necessary to go into long and expensive litigation in the effort to learn how much was due each of the contestants. Even Bellinger, toward the last, could not be sure of what he was doing, and in the sale to Loomis he refused to warrant the title to the water, although he could guarantee the land.

The heirs of Christopher Bellinger went to law over some of his property, and in 1843 the "Grist Mill" and water privileges were sold to Nicholas P. Casler, Peter Walrath and Henry Eysaman, who in 1844 sold it to Stephen W. Brown, and then the Astorogan company acquired them in the same year—the ultimate result of the first litigation indirectly affecting the power matter.

The Astorogan company bought the old saw-mill right, and all along the line of conveyances were the uncertainties as to who and how much. In the meanwhile, there had been errors of various kinds made, and one of these was in a flume and race leading from the Bellinger dam to the Loomis rights below.

Judge Loomis endeavored to enlarge and improve the channel. Actual work was begun, but the owners of The Cotton Mill went to court, stopping the work and beginning the litigation to determine what the holders of the privileges could rightfully claim in flow of water.

On the north side of the falls there existed similar troublesome divisions of power rights, of uncertain limitations, and the course of events there has been along lines similar to that on the South side. Some of the power owners on the South side obtained rights on the North side, and there were mid-stream complications, but in none of the difficulties between and among the powers were the issues more surprising than in the troubles that arose when the state began to assert the right of public domain over the flowing water in order to supply its canal.

In the beginning of the canal, the amount of water taken for the locking through of the boats did not alarm the owners of the powers. The canal was small, it was useful, it increased land values and everyone was glad to see it built.

But in the course of time, the demands of commerce compelled enlargements, and each enlargement required more water. The little "toy-canal" on the north side became a convenient source of water power after the Erie canal was built. Sundry of the South side powers were "extinguished" or amalgamated with other powers, and Nature took a hand by punishing humanity for stripping the dense forest canopy from the sterile lands on the hills. The stream flow became more and more variable.

When low water came, it was found that there was less power in the water than had been provided for in the wheels, and even when the difficulties among the power owners were settled, there was the common cause against the state itself.

Here arose some exceedingly nice and delicate questions of laws and rights. Where the boats navigated the stream, right of long use made them public highways, but where the water powers had been developed the traffic had taken to the land. Those water powers were taken and used—but by what authority?

In law there is no more subtle and perplexing a subject than the broad question of water rights. One may not divert the flow of a stream from its natural course without stepping on the toes of some precedent. At first, when there was abundance of water for all requirements in the flow of the Mohawk, the question was not raised, but Arphaxed Loomis saw what was coming, and he sued the canal appraisers because they had confiscated water which he contended belonged to him, because of his power rights.

The result of subsequent decision was decidedly disconcerting to the power owners. The court's contention was that the Mohawk river is a public highway, even down the tumbling falls, and that the state's purchases of rights of the Inland Navigation company





OLD SCHOOL HOUSE ON CHURCH STREET  
AS IT NOW APPEARS.

and other rights gives the state its never positively relinquished right to all the water it cares to take, and that the predicament of the mills cannot be considered in view of the circumstances. However, the power owners are welcome to the surplus waters.

All that has been related applies largely to the upper dams, although the diversion by the state affected, of course, the powers at the middle and lower dams as well. Each of these two dams have at various times presented problems peculiar to their own relations to floods and low waters, rights above, rights below, and divided rights, deeds that were not sufficiently specific, etc.

A deep study of the water power and related questions would make a man a hydraulic engineer and land surveyor on the one side, and a first class water rights attorney on the other—and there can be little doubt among the friends of one of the most eminent all-around citizens of Little Falls that his wide attainments and knowledge on many subjects are the result in large measure, after natural ability, to his thorough-going mastery of the problems arising from his extensive and diversified holdings in and along the Little Falls of the Mohawk.

Nor are the questions regarding the water powers at Little Falls all settled, even at this day. The state's barge canal project has added vastly to the demands on the water flow of the Mohawk river. The two great reservoirs at Delta and Hinckley cannot fail to complicate the questions already at issue. The new complications are already looming large—but in the long run matters will so adjust themselves to what is right and proper. In other matters, Little Falls has seen wrongs righted, and such wrongs as now may add difficulty to individual conditions will unquestionably be adjusted to the advantage of the general good. At the next centennial of Little Falls, it is some consolation to think, the individuals of today will not worry much about what is going on in the old home town.

There are indications that the water power problems will be settled in the long run by a return of the rights into one-head control. In the beginning, they were scattered among scores of users. The place had no men, and the times had no utilities for single-power development. A great hydro-electric plant would not only have solved all the vexatious questions of the early days, but it would have saved inestimable horse power which went to waste.



because of faulty construction and scattered thrust and energy.

The prophecy is worth venturing, from the surface indications now, that it will not be many years before the water powers will be under a central control, with more power than at present, due to prevention of waste, with the result of a city as much more capable than the present city, as the city now is over the village which a hundred years ago, in 1811, tried to rid itself of an unnecessary and obnoxious restraint on the energy and ability of its citizens.

### THE ROADS AND STREETS.

The Indians seem to have had at least four trails thro Little Falls; the south side carry, the north side carry, and a bank trail up and down the river on each side. The bank trails ran into the carry trails, in all probability.

When the Palatines came, near 1720, to German Flatts and settled along the valley on both sides of the river, they of course opened more trails, and developed roads, which in the winter time were good. These roads passed thro what are now the city limits long before the War of the Revolution.

There were several maps made of the north side after the Revolution, presumably in order to keep the absent proprietors posted with regard to conditions here. The south side was less fortunate, as regards maps.

The natural conditions dictated the course of those old trails. There were rocky ledges to avoid, streams in gullies to pass, cedar swamps to go around and the matter of distance yielded precedence to grade and convenience.

After the Revolution, the old carry, followed later by the canal on the north side, was the "principal street". The noted Yellow

House, occupied by John Porteous, was on the west side of Furnace creek, north of the carry. Near the upper landing was the Hinchman house. Between Furnace creek and Arnold creek (just west of the corner of Main and Second streets), stood two mil's and the house of John Griffing, near Furnace creek.

A road led up Furnace creek, turned to the east to the point of a ridge there—now Church street hill—and went thence northward toward Fairfield. The old river road, coming up gulf hill, along East Main street, joined this road about where The Richmond hotel stands now. Salisbury was reached over what is now Salisbury street. On the south side the road was down German street to the bridge and a trail led up Jefferson street into the valley below. This trail forked, and the old Herkimer carry trail went down to the landing on the head of Moss island. The lines of these old trails are indistinct, for streets have been straightened, crowded and moved bodily about.

The street names have been changed, as patriotism, local pride and prejudice, and expediency varied and advanced. Thus Gildersleeve street of old, became Hancock; Catherine, extending from Ann to William street, and First street, which was pressed across a steep-sided gully between Ann and Furnace streets, became parts of Main street; Canal street took the name of the east end of the same street, and became John street; Western and Eastern avenues continued West and East Main streets, while the old Turnpike beside the Inland Canal grew into Mill street.

The imagination is somewhat assisted by casual references in its effort to conjure back the street scenes and sounds of those old days. The men in knee breeches, the women in skirts that did not drag in the mud as they skipped from rock to rock, the children, pigs, slaves, wolfish dogs, carts (two and four-wheeled), drawn by

oxen or horses, the sled mud-boats, the boom of grouse, leaping up out of the dust between mud-holes, the startling whoop of Indians swaggering into town, the barking of the gray squirrels, the low thunder of the plunging Mohawk—these things we may picture in the little clearings in the tall timber among the patches of cedar thicket and mossy rocks.

The town, during the long years of unnecessary restraint under the alien proprietors, changed very slowly. A wooden bridge was built over the Mohawk at the foot of the Ann street of today, soon after John Porteous arrived, and on July 27, 1796, Porteous gave an order on Mr. Hawks to Mr. Beardslee for "what spikes he may want for the bridge"—presumably the river bridge.

For more than forty years after the Revolution, while on all sides the country grew and expanded with unrivaled energy and progressiveness, the Little Falls citizens were compelled to sit still watching the wonderful tide of humanity which poured westward through town. Up the Mohawk river in boats, and up the river road on foot, on horseback, in sleds, in two-wheeled carts, the pioneers came, literally by the thousand, pressing toward the fertile west beyond the forts at the Divide.

In 1811, for instance, the Hinmans left New Bedford—father, mother and eight children. They were in a two-wheeled cart, which carried all their possessions, and a supply of corn to last them through a seeding till the harvest a year later. They had a team of oxen and a cow. They came up the river road—the turnpike—stopping where night overtook them. They passed through Little Falls in early November—if only there was a picture of things exactly as they saw it—and pressed on into Madison county, a few

miles beyond Utica, where they felled timber for their cabin, and ate game to eke out the tiny supply of corn.

During the Revolution—long before the Revolution, in fact—the pioneers began to return down the valley with the fruits of their harvest. In 1811, the winter road to the east was travelled by long trains of sleds bound down to Albany with grain, furs, meat, to trade for "town goods". The farmers of a locality would begin to talk about going to Albany—old timers still called it "Corlears"—and when the snow was deep enough, a score of sleds, mostly drawn by oxen, would start together on the long journey. The journeyers carried their own blankets, which they spread down on the tavern floors. They came through Little Falls, their oxen steaming, the drivers yelping like Indians. Hard times? Doubtless, they froze their feet, hands and noses at times, they had fights when the tavern rum and 'stilled liquor warmed 'em up—but those journeys were picnics compared to the lonely toil in the wilderness, and the people of Little Falls rejoiced when the dull days between summer navigation and winter sledding were passed in autumn and spring.

As has been told elsewhere, the end of the Ellice proprietorship was heralded when the charter of 1827 gave the village trustees the right to open streets at the expense of adjacent land owners.

In 1831 a map was drawn and engraved which shows that Main street, between William and Ann, was called Catherine; First street (1831) was Main street from Ann street to Furnace creek; East Main street was Eastern avenue, and west of Furnace street it was Western avenue. The foot of Ann street was Bridge street. Albany (1829), John, Garden (1829), Gansevoort (1831), Monroe (1831) Salisbury (before 1800), Church (before 1800), William (1830), Mary (1830), Fourth (1830?), Third (1830?), Second (1829), were as now

except that the east end of Garden street was called Manheim street. It is clear that the able politicians of the state senate foresaw a land boom at Little Falls when they came into possession of the Ellice lands, for their map laid off lots on all sides of the actual village, which was between Furnace creek and Eastern avenue.

The old turnpike road, which came along East Main street of today, turned down Ann street, crossed the Inland canal and turned west along the south side, towpath of the canal. It is still there—considerably made over—on the north side of the Gilbert mill, on the remnant of the canal, which at the little bridge is as it was in the beginning.

On the south side, private lanes were declared public highways, so in the early thirties appeared German, Jefferson, Bellinger and Mohawk streets. There were toll roads in the city limits, plank roads, trails, short cuts, some of which were lost in the surveys of later dates, some of which were developed along more or less regular lines. Very steadily, as the needs required, came the improvement of the old streets, and the fixing of new ones. Canal, John, Mill, Porteous, School—all the other streets have their reasons for being.

Generally speaking, topography accounts for older streets, politics for the streets of the second period, and the later streets came from the exigencies of growth, real estate developments, demands of business, etc. Some streets were never built—that boulevard, for example, along the Burnt Rocks cliff. It was to go out to a beautiful park on the Burnt Rocks, and be the prettiest driveway in the Mohawk valley—but that was a dream of an earlier generation, easily recalled by men not yet old.

## SOME LATER TRADE NOTES.

Only glimpses of the trade in olden times can be given. It would be interesting to consider a trip to the stores that were run and managed by agents of the Ellices—stores that were like the little hamlet stores of this day, except that they had no such luxuries of canned goods, breakfast foods, varieties of prints, weaves, and cuts of cloth.

They had things not now sold—or called for—as the homespun which most people wore, as the fire-place implements, including long legged spiders, brass kettles, trammels, and home made shoes and boots and moccasins. Those were times when the cobbler raised the cattle whose hides he tanned and made into footwear.

From Morehouseville, the settlers drove down the long Jersey-field road with loads of cattle products—from butter and cheese to hides that were tanned with secret receipts and methods—and traded over the counters. To this day the memory of the Morehouse calf-skins makes an old-timer growl about modern hurry and methods. It would be wicked, perhaps, to question the comfort of the ancient cobbling, whose wearing qualities, judging from the relics, were quite as hard inside as out; tenderfeet were unknown in those days.

Commercial travelers were unknown, and men not very old may have seen the first one who came to Little Falls—but there were innumerable peddlers. Down East Yankees who carried packs, loaded with trinkets, clocks, knives, silk hand and neckerchiefs and who appeared on the heels of the fur-traders. Up the Mohawk before the days of the canal came trading boats bringing things for swap with the farmers along the banks, and they tied in at the





lower landing, and in some measure managed to compete with the stores of Ellice.

Of the few who tried to meet the Ellice terms of rental and profit sharing, William Brooks, in 1824, ran a store on Catherine street. He was worried by "long-winded credit business," and advertised his willingness to take 40,000 bushels of ashes—presumably for lye. There was a cabinet-maker, (Gould Wilson,) a hatter (William Talcott), the Green store (Burritt and Tomlinson), the D. & J. Petrie general store, tinnerns and stove dealers (Mather & Valdo), dry goods (Chauncey Marshall), general merchants (Wendell and Jenkins), the Little Falls bakery (E. Hathaway & Co.) a drug store (Smith & Hamilton), and a harness shop (Martin Bettinger). Over the Erie canal a little later came store-boats of various kinds, including the "Aquatic Bookstore," on which was to be had the best of reading, as well as sight of museum relics.

Beginning with the passing of the Ellice grip came the long list of tradesmen's names and some that were seen on the buildings in the '30s are still recalled with interest and affection by the generation of this day. Other names were, of course, of briefer passage.

Probably the first great alarm felt in the circles of Little Falls trade was that expressed by George H. Feeter, last of the Ellice agents here, at the time of the building of the Erie canal. The canal was on the south side, through the Bellinger estate, and General Bellinger saw to it that the south side began to build up rapidly. The turnpike, proud possession of the north side, looked suddenly insignificant beside the 30-ton boat waterway. The north side might fall behind! So they had to have the waterway over the river, and a harbor on the north side to maintain a parity.

Then, through the hard times of wild cat banks in 1836-8, the trade in Little Falls felt the trouble, somewhat, but the farms still furnished the foundations of trade. In later years, as the up-building of industries increased, the place felt more and more the drift of business in the outside world—till it became without reserve a unit in national manufacturing and finance, when, of course, it shared in greater or less degree the tumults of the nation's financial weas and woes.

Some peculiarities of trade were long retained here. It was connected with the west, rather than with the east in local traffic. It was the natural outlet for the upper Mohawk valley, and its first incorporation was several years before that of Utica. The strangling hold of the proprietor in the early part of the last century could not completely overcome the natural tendencies, but that bad policy without doubt shows to this day in the census returns, and possibly in the spirit of the place.

Little Falls traded with the Utica settlement before the canal, and the section of the canal between this place and Utica was in operation years before the passage was blasted through the south side granite. One cannot refrain from speculating on what would have been the condition of Little Falls—what its ambition, what its success—had the lands and water powers been owned from 1782 by Patriots instead of a selfish and contemptuous Tory exile.

There grew up a great trade on the canal. Stores were established at the locks, taverns were built along the towpath, and Little Falls became one of the famous stopping places between New York and the west that grew greater and greater as the means of transportation through this gorge improved. People stopped here to go to Trenton Falls, and to study the rock formations, and to



purchase supplies, not to mention local forms of entertainment which old timers recall with doubtful and smiling shakes of their heads.

The younger generation can hardly recall the days when boys ran away to become canalers—when it was entertainment and recreation to go down and watch the boats go by—when fortunes were founded supplying the needs of the thousands—almost millions—of people who traveled along the wonderful Erie, and wrote poetry about it, made epigrams, and preserved records of their impressions because they knew that they were taking part in, and helping make history.

Out of the early trade in Little Falls grew the need of banks. Need of money-script was supplied by John Porteous, who issued paper money here, as Dr. John Hurley's collection of paper money shows. A few years later, the Aqueduct Association issued money, to meet a financial emergency. Then, during the later years of the Ellice proprietorship there grew a keener demand for a real bank, and as late as 1833 the local newspaper was pouring out its hot shot on the state legislature which refused to authorize a bank here. Finally, the Herkimer County bank was incorporated on March 14, 1833, with a capital of \$200,000. The directors were N. S. Benton, S. Barry, S. W. Brown, Dudley Burwell, A. Loomis, F. Lansing, P. F. Bellinger, F. E. Spinner, Benjamin Carver, David Petrie, H. P. Alexander, John Stillwell, and Abijah Mann, Jr. This bank's charter expired in 1863, when it was reorganized as a national bank.

The Little Falls National bank was organized in December, 1878, and began business in 1879. Its officers were Seth M. Richmond, president; E. C. Rice, vice president; Amos A. Bradley, cashier; W. S. Feeter, assistant cashier and teller; directors, S. M. Richmond,

James Feeter, Isaac Small, E. C. Rice, J. H. Ives, R. H. Smith, A. L. Eaton, William Beattie and George Nelson.

The banks have weathered storms of extreme severity—there have been failures that affected the community, and places distant from Little Falls, but such has been the tradition and the practice of the banks that they have survived what in other towns has stricken the financial community cold. It means a good deal when banks survive after a leading industry goes under for millions.

Little Falls has no regrets nor excuses to make in the matter of its part in the development of the Mohawk valley. Some of our neighbors are proud of the part they have taken in that sort of history that runs to massacre, bloodshed and brutal attacks; Little Falls has but few mentions to make on that subject.

If there is any one thing that this city could boast more than any other, it is the wonderful diversity and picturesqueness—not to be proud of its constant successes—in matters of trade and traffic. There are few places anywhere in the country whose business has been more interesting, more satisfactory and steady than that of Little Falls.

There is an expression used by writers which indicates the great historical success of this city—a success that is vouched for in all kinds of documents, new and old—a writer would say that Little Falls has “human interest”.

## THE NEWSPAPERS.

The Americans were always fond of newspapers, whatever they may think of individual publications, but it took a long time to develop the newspaper men who could satisfy the news-hunter.

Many newspapers were established in Herkimer county before any was published in Little Falls, but those newspapers were precursors of the Little Falls efforts. Thus in 1802, or thereabouts, The Telescope blossomed and faded, soon to blossom again as the Farmer's Monitor, which died in 1807. Then came the Pelican, of Herkimer, in 1810, the Bunker Hill, in 1810, the Honest American, in 1812, and so on. It is preserved of them that they served this or that party, but what their news policy was is summed in the one word, suppression.

A newspaper appeared in Little Falls in September, 1821. It was a Democratic paper, started by Edward M. Griffing, and was called the People's Friend. It suffered hard times, of course, but turning thro some of the volumes that still survive, one finds real news items—that one about the girl who spun and reeled 100 knots of wool yarn in a day, for instance. The glimmerings of appreciation of what news in shown in the pages of The People's Friend, but not strong enough to hold the public. Doubtless the proprietor's agent helped Griffing edit it to the extent of suppressing things that happened.

Ten years later, the People's Friend was in difficulties, and it was taken over by "leading Democrats", and its name changed to the Mohawk Courier—which survives to this day in The Journal and Courier. The Journal part came in 1849 from Herkimer, having been established there in 1837 as a Whig paper, owned by a company, edited by J. C. Underwood. In 1861, Jean R. Stebbins bought the Journal, and in 1864 he bought the Courier and consolidated the two.

The Republican Farmer's Free Press, established in Herkimer in 1830, moved to Little Falls about 1832, where it eked along as

the Herkimer County Whig till about 1834, when it died with the Inquirer. These were papers with missions—one was anti-mason, the other is described as "deistical".

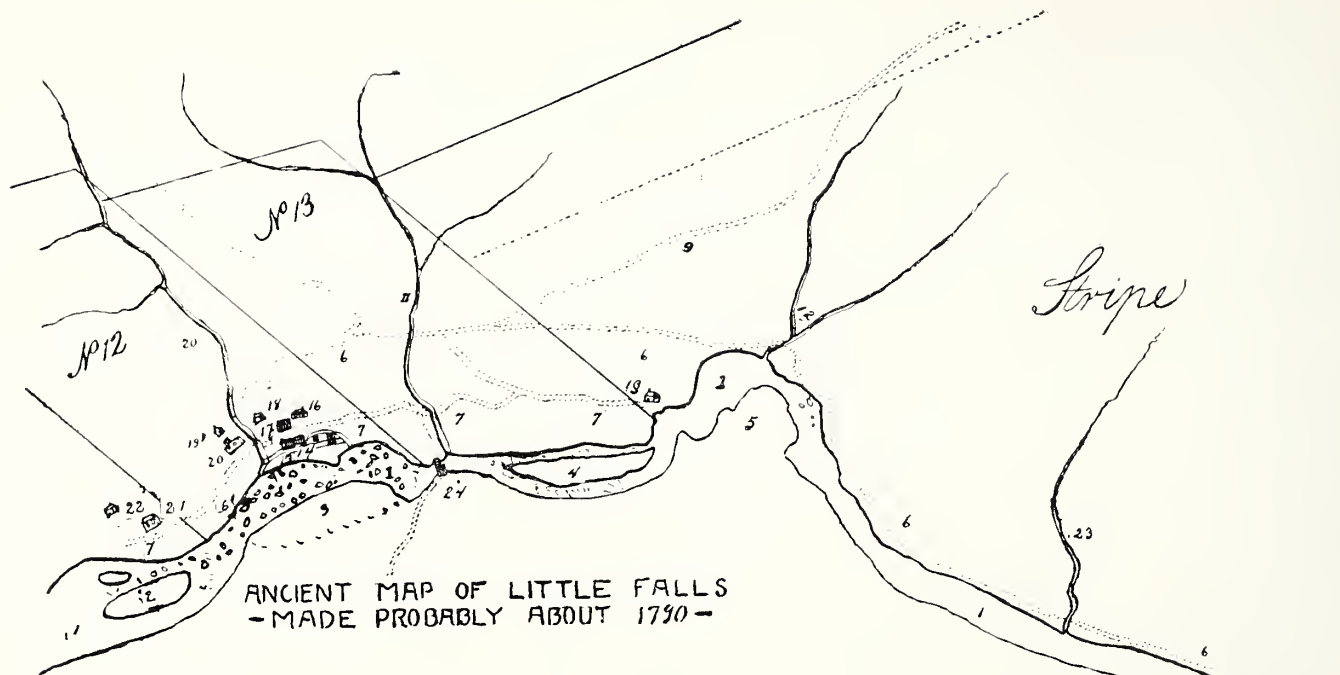
Edward M. Griffing started the Enterprise in 1839, and then the Mohawk Mirror, a twice-a-month sheet, which expired in 1844.

Abolition reached town in newspaper form about 1844, when O. A. Bowe was moved to leave the conservative Journal to establish the Herkimer Freeman, which survived about six years.

The Dairyman's Record, a semi-monthly, was founded February 15, 1859, by A. W. Eaton, and in May, 1860, to the Monthly Farmer, but even Ayer & Bringham could not keep it alive.

It took a good many years for the newspaper men to learn that the public desired not opinions, but facts. In the beginning, the editorial pages spread all over the paper, and one learns what happened from the advertising pages—if anything that happened was printed at all. Because the editor of the People's Friend printed things that happened, rather than notions on passing events the paper was able to survive, and when the proprietor failed, it was so valuable a sheet to the village that several men combined to keep it alive, and it still lives under another name because it continues the news policy. A keen student of Little Falls history, and collector of facts, Fire Chief Cooney observes that about 1856-7, the policy of printing local news as well as foreign, became sharply prominent, while the editorials shrank in volume and conspicuousness.

The Herkimer County News was established at Mohawk in 1868 as a Democratic paper, and made so excellent an impression that Little Falls Democrats urged Williams and Perkins to come to Little Falls, which they did in 1870. In 1871, L. W. Flagg bought it, and



ANCIENT MAP OF LITTLE FALLS  
- MADE PROBABLY ABOUT 1790 -

- No. 1. Mohawk River.
- " 2. Lock Island.
- " 3. Loomis Island.
- " 4. Seeley Island.
- " 5. Moss Island. - An island only at high water.
- " 6. Utica and Schenectady Turnpike.
- " 7. Carry or Portage around the Falls

- No. 8. Road to Fairfield and Newport
- " 9. Road to Salisbury.
- " 10. Furnace Creek.
- " 11. Arnold Creek.
- " 12. Creek at Gulf Bridge
- " 13. Drummond House.
- " 14 and 15. Mills.
- " 16. John Griffing,

- No. 17. Barn.
- " 18. Esic Arnold.
- " 19. Clay House, one-story stone.
- " 20. John Porteous, "Yellow House."
- " 21. Robert Hinchman Barn.
- " 22. Robert Hinchman House,
- " 23. Moralee Creek.

No. 24. Toll Bridge.

then a few months later, in August, T. M. Chapman of Canandaigua, N. Y., and W. R. Chapple of Cleveland, Ohio. In 1874 the Chapman interest was purchased by H. A. Tozer, who retired in 1877.

Mr. Chapple, who died in 1908, was to journalism here what X. A. Willard was to the farming industry—he was a breath of life. He had a fine courage, and was for years a brake on the avarice and carelessness of individuals and political machines.

In 1886, on May 10, the Little Falls Evening Times was begun as a daily by a company, with John F. Devlin as editor. It was the first Herkimer county daily, and it lived because it was a newspaper and not a purveyor of mere notions. After several ups and downs it passed into the hands of John Crowley and is now in every sense a modern and up-to-date daily.

Mention should be made of some of the writers who have had part in the newspaper work. Probably X. A. Willard was the most proficient of old time local writers. His articles were on farming and dairying, and they had a marked effect, not only around Little Falls but throughout the state. He filled many pages in the reports of the Agriculture Society reports, he was one of the most important contributors of the old time Country Gentleman, he edited the farmer's page of the Utica Morning Herald in the days of its great glory, and in countless ways he contributed to the records of the farm back in the fifties.

In the old Journal and Couriers are notable contributions from "Ned Buntline", who told of hunting and fishing expeditions and traditions. There are vast stores of historical reminiscence and discussion in the volumes of the newspapers, to which were signed the names of many notable men—Heath, Case and the like, who were glad to tell of the activities of their youth.

## THE CHURCHES.

Probably the first service of a religious character held in the limits of Little Falls, were idolatrous incantations with which Indians endeavored to win the favor of the spirits that held fish and game in their power. Probably, too, there were offerings to the spirit of the falls, of the rock, and of the gloomy gorge.

Then came the earliest fur-traders, who came from settlements where the forms of religion were more strictly observed, and the imagination has no difficulty in picturing the camp of one of these men, built of fresh scalps of bark, lighted in the night-gloom by a driftwood and fallen timber fire, with the leader praying and his followers on their knees around him—their old flint-locks handy in case of savage raid.

In 1642-43, we know that Father Issac Jogues was held prisoner by the Mohawks, among whom he practiced the rites of the Jesuits. He was treated in the barbaric manner of the Indians toward their prisoners, although he was not killed, the Dutch ransoming him from Corlears—Albany. He was reappointed as missionary to the Mohawks, and went among them in 1746, only to die by torture. Others of the Jesuits who went among the Mohawks in that time were Father Bressani, a prisoner in 1644; Father Simon Le Moyne, 1655-56-57; Fathers Fremin and Pierron, 1667; Fathers Boniface and Garnier, 1668; Father Bruyas, 1667 and 1672; Father DeGuesclis, 1674; and Father Jogues de Lamberville in 1775-78. By some of these men, without doubt, religious services were held at the Carry around the Little Falls of the Mohawk.

After the Palatines came, the itinerant clergymen doubtless held services at the Grist Mill, and the Old Yellow House, but it was not until 1796 that a building was erected especially for church



work. Then it was built by the Concord society, and very likely the fact that it was octagonal in shape was due to the fact that it was meant to embrace all religions, for its doors were open to all sects. In the beginning it seemed large—it was 55 feet on the short diameter.

The site of the Octagon church was where the Church street school now stands, and pictures show that the entrance was toward the east. When the church was torn down, due to lack of concord in the old Concord society, small boys took the old Bible and were tearing out the leaves when the father of Miss Harriet Wright came along and rescued it. Miss Wright gave it to Mr. Charles L. Petree by whom it is still preserved.

There was another Octagon church, built at Herkimer by the Palatines about 1730, which was destroyed by the Indians and French in 1757. It is suggested that this was the model by which the most remarkable building in this part of the state was erected. Numerous pictures and engravings preserve more or less accurately the appearance of the building, but information as to its size and arrangement is meagre.

Episcopal, Catholic, Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian had services in it, and no doubt the advocates of all Christian religions were welcomed by the Concord society, whose roll call of names indicates the diversity of beliefs in the first congregations in this city. There were not enough of any one sect to maintain a regular pastor, or even to bring in a circuit rider, so they united—as church members have always done, when it came to a question of combat against the common evil.

Most of the people in Little Falls were Scotch, like the proprietors and their agent, and consequently the Presbyterians were able to

engage a circuit rider and hold services on alternate Sundays, sharing a Rev. Mr. Andrews with Herkimer. After several changes, the village, in May, 1812, engaged a pastor at \$450 a year.

It seems probable that as early as 1789, there were Methodist Episcopal preachers at Little Falls, and it is certain that there were services here at intervals that grew more and more frequent until in November, 1832, an organization was made in the old stone school house, largely through the efforts of Rev. Darius Simmons, a circuit rider. The church was erected in 1838-9.

In 1820, the first Episcopal services were held in the Octagon church by Rev. Mr. Powers, and on Jan. 23, 1824, Rev. Phineas L. Whipple of the Fairfield Trinity church was engaged for \$200 to conduct services here half the year. In 1835 the Episcopal church being built in 1835.

The Baptist church was organized by members of the Fairfield church, being dismissed for the purpose on Christmas day, 1829, and the organization was made on January 27, 1830. The first church was built in 1832.

St. Paul's Universalist church was incorporated on May 3, 1851, and quarters for holding services secured in 1855, the present church being built in

Catholic services were held here in the early days, but it was not until the Erie canal had been built and the railroad was coming through that the flock left the faithful Octagon church to enter a building of its own. With the great impetus given the village by the coming of the canal and the railroad came the St. Mary's Roman Catholic church. In 1847, a modest frame building was constructed and dedicated as St. Mary's church.





In 1849, Rev. P. Herlan came to Little Falls on the German Evangelical church circuit, and in January, 1857, the church was incorporated.

In recent times, other churches have come, but it is not possible in the brief limits of time and space to attempt to tell the real story of the churches of Little Falls—the part that they took in the work for morality, in the discussion of slavery, in the political life of the city, and in numberless other matters of public concern.

### STRAY NOTES.

There are many interesting features in the history of Little Falls which deserve mention, and much more, if space permitted. For example, there are the attempts that have been made to have the name changed. In 1768, for instance, some one wanted the place called Canajoharie Falls, and at the time of the second charter it was proposed that the place be called Astenrogan; in 1836, some one thought Clifton would be a better name, and a number of very young people succeeded in having the name changed to Rockton in 1850.

Just what led to this change is doubtful. There are always uneasy people in the world who imagine anything old fashioned is out of date, but after two years, these young people gained some modicum of sense—at least some of them did—and Little Falls came to its own name again. The excuse for “Rockton” was that Little Falls got its name from the town—instead of the town from Little Falls, but since 1852, the uneasy have diverted their energies to more worthy endeavors.

There are countless little memories which give the imagination

pictures of the times. There was a twelve year old girl in 1824 who got the record of spinning and reeling 100 knots of wool yarn in one day.

They used to hunt gray and black squirrels along the West Main street of today, long after the lots were surveyed out in the early thirties. On the Big Pines, on the other side of town, they killed a lot of foxes, rabbits and squirrels, but a man named Boyer started a fire there in 1844 which killed all the trees, and in 1853 came another fire which destroyed the very duff and humus—and from that time they were called the Burned Rocks.

Pigeons flocked by the thousands into the wheat and grain fields, and, as the grain came ripe, the boys and girls had to be put on guard to drive the birds away. On June 16, 1824, Captain Jacob Klock and Captain Abraham Wolever chose sides for a hunt. Klock's five men killed 1187 birds, Wolever's five killed 1037, and the Wolevers furnished a supper for all hands that night.

There was good small game hunting all over town—so good that one morning Watts T. Loomis went down to the cedar swamp about where the Baptist church stands now, and killed 17 woodcock before he had breakfast. Grouse were on the hills and right down to the edge of the gardens, while on the river the wild fowl flocked and in the migration days the hunters killed geese and ducks, above and below the falls, in the still-waters.

They used to go down to the foot of the falls, in the days before the war, and grapple for the suckers which came in shoals to the rocks—wagon loads were taken away. The Drummond Hole was a famous fishing pool, where they caught bass. Once in a great while—every two or three years, a trout would be taken by some lucky fisherman, out of the Mohawk.

One who owned a spring was considered fortunate, and to this day some houses are fed from springs through pipes that are laid here the old waterlogs were first put. The tradition of the pure spring water has come down to this time—unhappily, in some instances, for springs that drain the washings of a thousand homes can hardly be pure as the springs that boiled up among the cedars. It is only twenty-five years since the water was brought in from Weaver Brook. Before that, the reservoirs were in the parks—little artificial ponds, into which the boys dumped all the gates, stoops, wagons and other loose property on Halloween.

Those were the days of Ef' Hoover's string band. He was the most famous of Little Falls fiddlers, and he was called "all over" to play for the dances and parties, where they danced square dances, French Four, Money Musk, Virginia Reel, Grand Square, and many others. A little later came the merry-making James Bucklin, who could play a fiddle and tell a story with any of them. Bucklin was a great fox-hunter, too, and his store was the center of the wits and hunters from far and wide.

It would be interesting to give in detail the stories of visits by famous people—among them were Jenny Lind, who sang, as did any other sweet voice, in the old Washington Hall, now known as the Wells House, which stands at the corner of Ann and Mill streets, and has a reputation of its own, even in these days. The Keller hall was another famous scene of noted events. Little Falls has always noted for its music, and perhaps in the beginning the fiddling of John Porteous awakened in young hearts the desire to play as well as he did; certain it is that there is many a hint in the beginning that became a fact in later years, not only in music, but in trade, character, politics, industry, spirit; but this phase of growth can be merely suggested.

Buttermilk Falls, the Hinneuman Hole, the pot holes down in the river rocks, traces of the vast glacial lake in the days when the St. Lawrence waters poured down the Mohawk valley, the "diamonds", the traces of gold—these and other natural features loomed large in the olden days, but can only be named in the brief space of these pages.

Even after the railroad came, the stage coaches still ran up and down the valley. Around the old Post Tavern on Main street (Catherine street of old), is clustered unnumbered traditions. Presidents came this way on occasion, Washington first, and others in later years. Daniel Webster's magnificent equipage excited the wonder of small boys as it rounded up to the stopping place. Lafayette came here—at the expense of the nation, and rode out to Trenton Falls, it seems.

In the whisperings of tradition are less savory memories. There were great organized bands of thieves, and one may still learn the names of men who helped horse thieves hide their booty, who sheltered the desperadoes in time of pursuit, and who slipped away to other neighborhoods to steal and rob. In the old newspapers are stories of local crime—a train robbery, murders, a famous bank robbery, and the like in numbers sufficient to indicate how great has been the change in moral standards.

The bearing of these minor matters on the major interests of the village might be traced at length and through many ramifications. Some of the traditions indicate the beginnings of a better and happier Little Falls—some point out its curious natural advantages. The village never did suffer from the great epidemics of old. Its steep streets permitted the hard rains to wash away the causes of death, and much of the great good health was and is due to the vigorous exertion required in moving up and down the hills



whose value to mankind is not always appreciated, even in these days.

In all accounts of Little Falls' educational beginnings, the name of Elijah Case is well preserved. He was the first teacher in the old two-story stone school house, which still stands at the corner of School and Church streets. It was built in 1796, apparently, and the stone used were thin, flat blocks from nearby quarries.



**LOCK OF WESTERN INLAND NAVIGATION CO.**  
Oldest in the United States.

There were many itinerant teachers, and it is recalled that there were a number of private schools established during the years of old. Pupils were whipped, and about the most that is known of what Case did is the fact that he "whaled" the pupils who did not do as he reckoned they ought to do with hand and mind.

It is not quite clear what were the courses of education. Reading, writing and arithmetic were taught, but so were other things, as latin, astronomy, morals and similar special subjects.

Parents of pupils were obliged to pay for each pupil, with the result that education was confined largely to the children of those who had the most money. Boys had more advantages than girls, who were thought to be smarter if they could spin a hundred knots of wool yarn in a day than if they could read, write or do sums. Just before the Revolution, not one in a score of women could write her own name, and on the petitions of Mohawk valley women to the governor and military forces the signatures were usually "Xs", supplemented by the legend "Her Mark."

Before the Revolution Johan Jost Petri was regarded as a man of extra attainments, outranking the Herkimers in this respect. The war of the Revolution compelled a very great deal of correspondence, and the practice improved the intellectual status of the men very markedly. Unhappily, a vast deal of the early records and manuscripts of the early days of Little Falls have fallen into the hands of neat house-keepers, of careless executors, and other practical people, with the result that it is not possible to give any extended description of intellectual conditions, in the early days of Little Falls.

John Porteous, whether because he was the agent of the Ellice estate, or because of actual attainments, is said to have been a man of trained mind. He corresponded with people far and near, and it



seems that some of this correspondence was more intellectual than business-like; however that may be, the letters which Porteous left were all destroyed thirty or forty years ago.

The usual way of training a youth for business was to put him into the employment or care of able men in their line—thus fur-traders sometimes carried apprentices into the wilderness with them, and in later years, the boy in the store eventually bought out the proprietor, or some other proprietor. Doctors and lawyers studied under successful men in these professions, and a good many attorneys still living were trained in offices of older men, and got most of their educations in the course of "reading", which supplemented the actual experiences of the young men.

When Little Falls was freed from the clutches of Ellice, the impetus reached the schools as well as business and professions. The money was not all drained out in rents and over-charges, and the more forward class of people could afford to give the young people the best that was going, and the all around attainments of Watts T. Loomis, for example, is an instance of Little Falls training of the thirties and forties.

Little Falls sent many youths to Fairfield, and other famous academies. Its own academy, incorporated by the State Board of Regents on October 17, 1844, was excellent, and took the place of hit-or-miss private tuition. It is a notable fact that the first school was one of the most substantial buildings ever erected here, and from Master Chase's tin horn tooting to the great bells of later days, the place has paid education the high compliment of extra care and thought. In 1856 there were accommodations for six hundred pupils in local schools. The progress subsequent to 1830 was rapid, and it has always been a high honor to sit on the school boards in this city, and no higher compliment is paid by the public than when it intrusts the training of the young people to the care of its ablest and foremost citizens.

In 1852 the fine St. Mary's parochial school building was erected and the original building has been replaced from time to time with structures commensurate with the growth of the congregation of St. Mary's, and from this school have come in their youth many of the foremost citizens of the city. Just now the building is being doubled in size.

# LITTLE FALLS IN THE CIVIL WAR

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During the Civil war, Little Falls was a lively town of about 6,000 inhabitants. Its young men showed their patriotism by enlisting—and there were many boys who ran away to join the army—boys of twelve years, and the present mayor, Hon. Timothy Dasey, was fifteen when he made his way to the front as a drummer in the Union army. Some of the youngsters did not succeed in eluding the parental vigilance, and they were brought back from the army, mourning because they were not permitted to go to the front to fight for Uncle Sam.

Enthusiasm was great, but there were stay-at-home patriots who were needed at the front, and the draft came, and the drain on the people of Little Falls—as on all the Northern states—was terrible. One finds evidence of the tragedy of war in the census returns of Little Falls for 1860 and 1865. They were:

Population of Little Falls, (town), 1860.....5,989.

Population of Little Falls, (town), 1865.....5,588.

More than four hundred loss in population—mostly heroic dead on southern battle fields. There is no way of estimating the loss in Little Falls efficiency because it gave so freely of its splendid youth and courage. There is no saying how much Herkimer county, or New York, or the great Northern states lost because they gave in charity the splendid lives, the unstinted blood, of their most patriotic men; but Little Falls has no regrets to offer. It

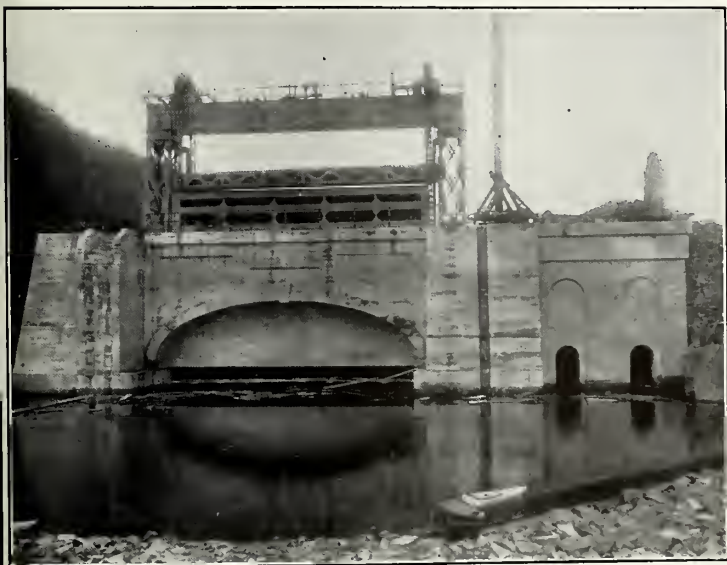
gave men who suffered willingly, eagerly, that the Union might be preserved and that the wrongs inflicted upon weaker people might be righted. The national sin of slavery was washed away with the blood of a million men—and Little Falls gave its hundreds.

On April 20, 1861, a Union meeting was held at Little Falls, presided over by Major Zenas C. Priest. Speeches were made by Hon. Arphaxed Loomis, Rev. B. F. McLoughlin, Rev. J. D. Adams, Hon. A. H. Laflin, Hon. George A. Hardin, and Arnold Petrie. Union sentiment was aggressive and unflinching; \$5000 was raised for the families and dependents of those who should volunteer. On May 8, only eighteen days later, Company B. raised in Little Falls, five other companies from Herkimer county, two from Steuben, one from Clinton, one from Essex and one from Albany were organized into the Thirty-fourth Regiment of Infantry, and went to the front as the Herkimer county regiment. The ladies of Little Falls, after the regiment was accepted and mustered in, sent a stand of colors by Horace Burch. Of the 786 who went to the front, only 400 were mustered out two years later, the others being either dead or crippled.

The Ninety-seventh, mustered in at Boonville on February 19, 1862, had a company, I, which was recruited largely at Little Falls, and other companies were from Herkimer county. More than one half of this regiment was killed or wounded in less than an hour at Antietam. The names of 2200 men were on the muster rolls of

this regiment during its term of service; 25 officers and 322 men survived to be mustered out.

The 121st regiment was another Herkimer county organization. Company A was largely from Little Falls. Its camp was at the H. J. Schuyler farm, and is remembered as Camp Schuyler. They sang "We Are Coming Father Abraham, Three Hundred Thousand Strong," for that was the Herkimer county response for Lincoln's call for 300,000 volunteers. On August 31st, 1862 it marched to



NEW BARGE CANAL LOCK.

Herkimer station. It was mustered out on June 2, 1865, and on July 4, twelve thousand people met it at Little Falls—what was left of it. Of 1,076 men who went away, 445 returned.

Company A, of the 152nd regiment, was recruited chiefly in Little Falls. After eight days in the Wilderness battles in the spring of 1864, a letter was written on May 13 which says:

"We went into the fight with 446 men and fifteen officers, and came out today with four officers and ninety-four men. Out of fifty-six men in Company A there are just seven left."

Besides these men who went to regiments that were largely from Herkimer county, others joined other companies, and Herkimer county men were found in regiments accredited to far states. Oneida county regiments had many Herkimer county men in them, and boys who desired to escape the supervision of parents went even further to make certain that they have their opportunity to make their utmost sacrifice on the altar of national patriotism and love of country.

There was a steady flow of volunteers from Herkimer county to the front. Company M of the Second Regiment of Rifles called many Little Falls men. The eager spirit waned all over the country, and besides, there were a great many men who stayed at home when the country could spare much more economically than those who went to the front with eager willingness. The stay-at-home patriots, urging the others to hasten to the war, could be reached only by compulsion, and the draft came at last on August 27, 1863. The town of Little Falls furnished its full quota of 176 men, and again on June 8, 1864, another 176 men.

The story of the men who went to the front from Little Falls cannot be told here. They went through scores of battles, and the

narratives of those battles is for national history. In Little Falls there were hard days—terrible days for the women and children, the old men who could not go, the boys who were tied home by youth—and some few uncomfortable days for the copperheads, who enjoyed the hospitality of the nation, but were unwilling to expose their precious hides in the national service.

Many men were more useful at home than they could possibly have been at the front. In the old stone mill and in the brick mill (Saxony), the making of army blue cloth went on night and day, and it was hard to keep the spinners and weavers from going to the front when they should have remained applying skill to work which was less heroic, and quite as needful—supplying the armies with clothes.

The mills ran night and day, and there were spinners who made \$7 or \$8 a day at the work. There were men who went to Watervliet to mould bullets. There were men who went to other great plants engaged in the hard, exacting toil of making supplies for the armies to use in crushing the great rebellion against the American flag.

On the farms there was trouble to get the crops into the ground and harvested when grown. The women and children worked in the fields, and they worked in the factories as never before, and by their toil they supported themselves, helped the cause, and enabled the fathers, sons and brothers to fight on with good heart. But there were many farms which could not be kept up, and all over the country, and especially in neighborhoods like Little Falls, were farms that went to ruin and weeds because their heroic owners were willing to give up thought of gain in order to do a public duty.

Bulletins came daily from the front. The mothers sent the children to hear the news, in ordinary times, but when the country

was waiting breathlessly as a battle became imminent, the people flocked to the board and watched it. Then came the returns:

### KILLED—WOUNDED—MISSING.

Breathlessly, they listened, crowding close while some loud voice called out the tragic lists—the tragic lines that told of the horrors of war. A name would be called out, and some mother or daughter would utter a cry, falling perhaps in a faint, a child's voice would break into weeping as it turned and ran to tell its mother, when another name was called. Some man would groan as he heard that his brother or son would lie in a soldier's grave a thousand miles away. Names were read which none knew, and the listeners would whisper, asking—some youth who had come down out of the mountains, some man whose whim had been to lose his identity, and there would be sympathy for people who would never know what became of their own people. Many a man whose life had seemed worthless, whose name was a shame to himself and a scandal to his home, quietly stole away to the war, faced the danger with equanimity and with a courage none had ever dreamed was in him, made the supreme sacrifice.

The tears that Little Falls shed in those long years of horror were part of the price that had to be paid to the greed that wronged the negro and made him a slave. The undying sorrow, the hearts torn with anguish, the lives of the men who died—all the suffering of the innocent—are the claims that Little Falls has in the court of final award against the souls whose injustice brought on the terrible wrecking of lives and homes.

The final scene of actual war was when the body of Lincoln was brought through this city. On his way to Washington to become president, he had been here. Now, his own agony of



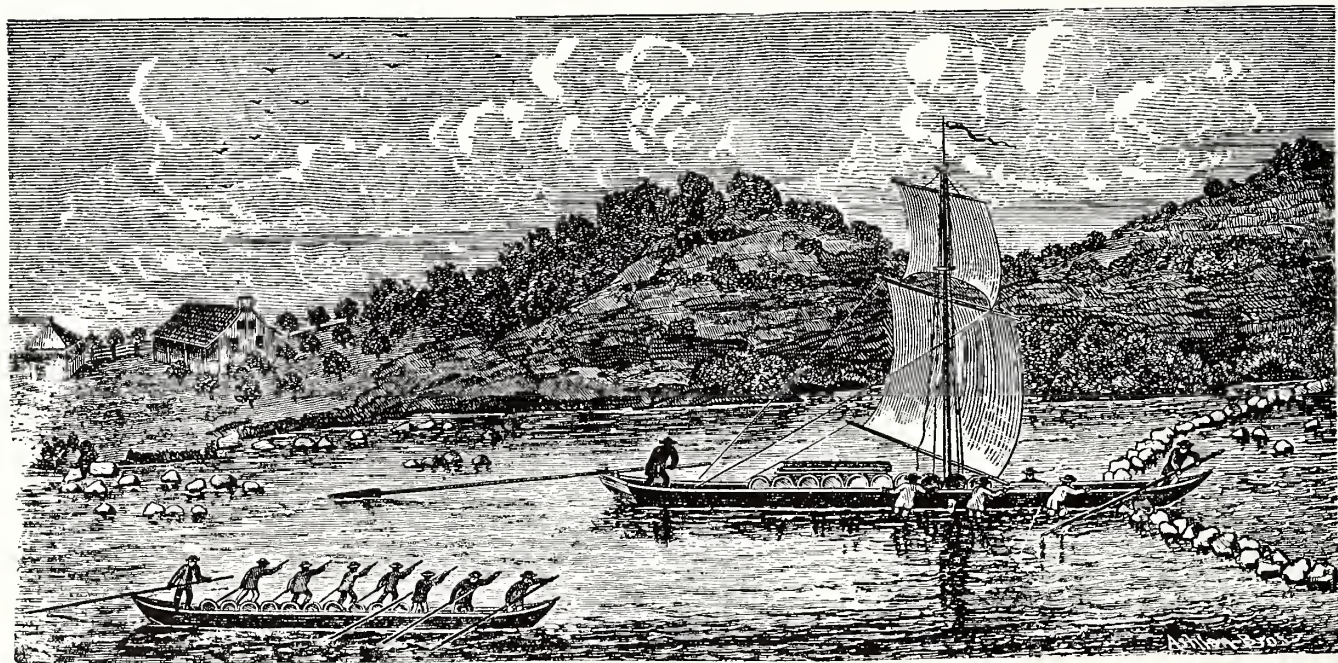
sacrifice ended, his clay returned by the same route. The funeral train went through the rows of silent mourners, many of whom had during his life, with human frailty, hated him—and now when their tears fell they meditated on the stakes of the heart and soul. It is easier to wrong the living than it is to make atonement to the dead.

On his bier were laid wreaths in the name of Little Falls by Mrs. Harry Burrell and Mrs. Greene. Men who had refused to go down to honor him when he was on his way to Washington, because it was feared business would be greatly disturbed in the event of a

war with the arrogant southern slave-holders, now saw clearly that there were higher things in life than profit, that a nation's wealth is less than a nation's honor and that selfishness at last grovels at the feet of civic duty.

Little Falls paid a great price into the National Treasury of Honor. Whatever was in the past, whatever the future has to offer, it is written for all time that when Little Falls saw the public duty that it had to do, it did it.





EARLY TRANSPORTATION ON THE MOHAWK.

(FROM AN OLD PRINT.)

# MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, 1811-1911

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There is but slight record of the industrial status of Little Falls in the year 1811. It is known, however, that before the Revolution there was a grist mill within the present corporate limits of Little Falls. This mill was destroyed by the Indians in June, 1782. It was rebuilt in 1789. It was located on Furnace creek, but the exact spot is not definitely known, or at least the writer is unable to find its exact location.

From the granting of the village charter in 1811 down to the year 1839, quite a few establishments for the manufacture of one thing or another of various degrees of importance to the life of the village were started. We find that in 1820 a fulling mill was erected, also a paper mill by Spraguet Dann. In 1839 Little Falls claimed a population of 2,000. Also, it was claimed in 1839 that the following were added to Little Falls' industrial equipment: One paper mill, one furnace and one woolen factory. At this time there was already in operation in Little Falls the following: Two saw mills, two flour mills, one custom grist mill, one plaster mill, one carding mill, two furnaces, one sash and blind factory, one machine shop, one tannery, located on the present site of the old Girvan House barn, three paper mills, one distillery, one brewery, two malt houses, two bakeries, one trip hammer, and two tin shops, besides a woolen mill, a paper mill and a furnace in process of construction. These establishments must of necessity have been on a small scale, and without doubt the old system of barter was largely in vogue. During the early history of Little Falls, and down to 1831, the lands and

water power on the north side of the Mohawk river were owned by the Ellice estate, Alexander Ellice, the founder, who died in 1808, having obtained a patent to same through his friendship with Sir William Johnson. It was the policy of the Ellices to lease these lands and privileges on the north side of the river, and for long periods rather than sell outright. This was a handicap and retarded development on this side of the river, as the people were unwilling to make improvements on lands they did not own. It undoubtedly was largely due to this policy that matters progressed more rapidly on the south than on the north side of the Mohawk river. In the year 1831 this policy was changed, when matters advanced more rapidly on the north side.

One of the oldest buildings erected in Little Falls for manufacturing purposes and still standing, is the old stone mill building, located on Mill street, just west of Andrew Little's planing mill. This old building was built early in the last century, the exact date being unknown. Since then it has passed through the hands of many proprietors and was many times improved and repaired. Just west of the old stone mill is the Henry Cheeney Hammer company building. This building now occupies the site of the old William Ingham fulling and carding mill, one of the first mill sites sold in Little Falls. During the year 1810 a grist mill was built on the site of the present Rockton knitting mill, and some years later a saw mill was also built on the same site. In 1837 a brewery was added to the grist mill. These buildings were demolished in 1844 to make



room for a large stone factory, as it was referred to in those days. The building was erected by a company of citizen stockholders and was named the "Astorogan cotton mills". The company was not successful, and in a few years the property passed into the hands of Garner & Company of New York, and was put to the manufacturing of print cloths, turning out about 1,500,000 yards annually. The property is now occupied by Whitman Bros. as the Rockton knitting mills.

On the north side of the river the building known as Ladue's saw mill was erected previous to 1850. The building now occupied by Andrew Little was built in 1846 and was at first equipped with machinery for the manufacture of sash and blinds. The mill known as the old Valley flouring mill was built in 1836. The old Mohawk mill was built in 1842 for the manufacture of woolen goods, and at one time an industry of considerable importance to Little Falls. These mills had a varied experience, finally passing into the hands of A. T. Stewart & Co., celebrated New York merchants at the time. Of these buildings still remaining one is occupied by the Electric Light & Power company and the Stafford & Holt knitting machine works, and the other forms a part of the large knitting and yarn plant of Robert MacKinnon & Company, located on the north side of South Ann street. Another of the old mill buildings erected about 1850 is best known as the Saxony woolen mills. This building was first used in the manufacture of ingrain carpets and woolen cloths, and was later occupied as the Saxony knitting mill. It is now occupied by the C. J. Lundstrom company in the manufacture of book cases, etc. The building originally was erected by Trumbell, French & Co.

Another of the older industries in Little Falls is the Reddy machine shop and foundry. On this site in 1830 a paper mill was

erected by William J. Pardee and for a time operated by him, later being operated by M. W. Priest and William Paige, a picture of which appears in this book. It was burned in 1839, rebuilt of wood by S. M. and A. Richmond, and again burned in 1853 and rebuilt the same year of brick. It was used as a shoddy, and later as a starch mill, before passing into the hands of Michael Reddy. Early in the history of the village a wooden building was erected, adjoining the paper mill above mentioned, by Alanson Ingham, and used as a felting and clothing works for a time. The building was then converted into a machine shop, and a foundry was also established in connection with it. In 1832 Shepherd, Babbitt & Co, manufactured stoves on the present site of the Reddy machine shop. The Babbitt of this firm was the late B. T. Babbitt, the famous soap manufacturer of New York. After passing through several hands it was purchased by Michael Reddy and became a part of his extensive works, still running. The old yarn mill on Loomis island, near the Reddy foundry, was built by Earl Trumbull between 1845 and 1848, on the site of the Heath & Barber foundry, which was one of the very early manufacturing establishments of the place. It was destroyed by fire in 1853 and rebuilt by A. Loomis the same year. It was occupied by Gay & Barber and later by John C. Cunningham, and in 1870 came into the possession of Titus Sheard. The site of the paper mill now occupied by William Kingston & Co. was in the early history of the village occupied by a woolen mill, which was also used as a flax dressing mill. Near here in early times was the small machine shop of Tillinghast & Son, which was destroyed by the flood of 1865, the son being the well known railroad man, James Tillinghast, for many years general superintendent of the New York Central railroad, and afterwards president of the Canadian Southern railroad. On its site a last factory was erected, which was operated by Kingston & Co.



On the north side of the river, and in the east end of the village, is the Little Falls Paper company. This building was erected by S. M. and A. Richmond, associated with Mr. E. B. Waite, in 1857. Another of the old buildings erected in the early history of the village is the stone building on the corner of Main and Furnace streets. This building was once occupied as a foundry. It came into the possession of Titus Sheard in 1880, was improved and enlarged, and converted into a knitting mill.

In 1858 J. J. Gilbert built a stone factory on Seeley island, south bank of the Mohawk, in the eastern part of the village, and began the manufacture of starch, which was for many years a leading industry. Adjoining this building on the west was the Woodbridge paper mill. These buildings were converted into a knitting mill in 1886 by Gilbert & Walrath, Mr. J. J. Gilbert of this firm being a son of the founder of the starch works. The Warrior Mower company, organized in 1868, but now out of existence, was once a prosperous industry of Little Falls. It occupied buildings on the south bank of the Mohawk river on Mohawk street, in the manufacture of mowing machines, part of which are now occupied by the Dingman company and the Riverside knitting mill. The building adjoining the Warrior Mower building on the east was occupied as a furniture factory nearly 40 years ago by Jacob Moll. This building burned down in the early seventies, and on its site the present building, now occupied by the Riverside knitting mill, was erected. This building was for a time occupied by the Swiss Milk company, controlled by the Havemeyers, and later, about 1887, by the Enterprise knitting mill, which was started by the late Edward Evans, in company with two other men by the names of Lambert and Addie. Another mill building, though small, which has played quite a part in the industrial life of Little Falls, is the small brick building on the north bank of the Mohawk river, on the south side of East Mill

street, and situated just east of the old gas works. It was a part of the Loomis estate. This building has had various occupants. During the Civil war it was occupied by Mitchell & Bailey as a shoddy mill. In the early 70's it was occupied by a Frenchman, and it was in this mill that the first knit underwear was manufactured in Little Falls. The late firm of Green & Girvan once operated a knitting mill in this building. It was also in this building that Robert Ablett, Robert MacKinnon and Walter Hume started a knitting mill in 1881, and it was the start in the knitting industry in this building that enabled Robert MacKinnon in subsequent years to erect the mammoth buildings now bearing his name, and in which he conducted so large and successful a business in the manufacture of knit underwear for so many years, employing in the neighborhood of 2,000 hands. During the occupancy of Ablett, MacKinnon & Co. the building was known as the Anchor knitting mills, the name being changed to the Riverside knitting mill by Eugene Walrath in 1891, when he began the manufacture of French balbriggan underwear in this building. Just east of the above mentioned building is the Becker & Co. plant, now manufacturing cotton batting, etc., the old brick building being now used in connection with their works.

Lying just east of the above is the Zoller pork packing establishment. This industry was started by Jacob Zoller over 50 years ago, Mr. Zoller erecting the present building in 1883, from which a large and successful business is now being carried on by his sons under the style of the Jacob Zoller company. On the east of the Zoller building, on the bank of the Mohawk river on East Mill street, is situated the present Barnet tannery buildings, a tannery having been in existence on this site a great many years. The buildings were first built and the business carried on by the late Nelson Rust. The Barnet tannery is now one of Little Falls' largest industries.

The first knitting mill started in Little Falls was by the Little Falls Knitting Mill company. This company was organized in 1872 with a capital of \$60,000. The original building occupied by this company was erected by Mitchell & Bailey in 1872, and purchased by the company. The company began the manufacture of underwear in 1873. This factory building was on the north bank of the Mohawk river, at the head of the old canal of the Western Inland Navigation company. It is now a small part of the present large plant of the Gilbert Knitting company.

Chr. Hansen's laboratory, located on what was once known as Lock island, now Hansen's island, for the manufacture of butter color, rennet extract, cheese color, rennet tablets, etc., was founded by J. D. Frederiksen. The business was first started in a building on the south side of the tracks of the New York Central railroad and opposite the old depot. It was moved to its present site in 1891.

The business of manufacturing shoddy and wool extract in Little Falls was started by Smith & Bushnell on a small scale in a building on Loomis island in 1882. The business grew rapidly, and in 1887 a new building was erected on Moss island and occupied for this purpose. This is now the present Adirondack Woolen Mills, and located on Moss island, on the south bank of the river.

Another of the industries started in Little Falls nearly 40 years ago was the paper box factory, started by Victor Adams in a small way, in the third story of the building on the corner of Main and Ann streets. In 1879 Mr. Adams built the present box factory on East Mill street and began the manufacture of paper boxes there. Mr. Adams built the knitting mill adjoining the box factory and operated the same successfully for a long time. These are now the property of the Little Falls Manufacturing company, and being

operated under the management of Mr. L. U. Lynt. Mr. Adams also operated a wooden box factory, which is now being continued by his son, Bertram Adams, in a building situated just west of the Zoller packing company building and on the north bank of the Mohawk river, this building being once a part of the Victor Adams plant. Another of our industries carrying on the business of making wooden packing cases is that of Jacob Dettinger, who purchased and is now occupying the old Ladue saw mill, located on Mill street, just west of the Cheeney Hammer company building. Mr. Dettinger also carries on here the manufacture of cheese boxes, besides operating the saw mill.

Of the once prosperous industries within the recollection of the writer that have ceased to exist, which it is well to recall at this time is the Saxony Knitting company, the Titus Sheard company the Warrior Mower company and the Titus Sheard yarn mill, which was located on Loomis island. In addition to the above was the Pike Knitting Machine company, the Superior Furnace company the Enterprise knitting mill, the Parker Electric Light company, and a suspender company. To the above should be added the Charles Benedict carriage works, on Mary street, and the Quackenbush Bros. wagon shop, carried on in the building now occupied by George Andrews as the White Star laundry on Second street.

Little Falls ranks first in population, in commerce and manufactures in Herkimer county.

#### PRESENT INDUSTRIES.

D. H. Burrell & Co.—This is the largest establishment of its kind in the United States. The firm are manufacturers of and dealers in dairy machinery, supplies and apparatus, and also handle



the products of other manufacturers. Its products are sold in nearly all the markets of the world.

The Robert MacKinnon Mills.—These mills are located on the north side of East Mill street, and on West Mill and South Ann streets. This was the largest knitting mill plant in the country to be operated by single individual management.

The Gilbert Knitting company.—This company operates in connection with its knitting mill a yarn mill, adjoining its knitting mill on Elizabeth street. The company also operates the Astoranga knitting mill on Seeley island. It is also one of the largest knitting establishments in the country.

The Rex Knitting Co.—This company was organized in 1905, and occupies the old mill of the late Titus Sheard Co. Its principal product is sweaters and sweater coats.

The Little Falls Manufacturing Co.—This company purchased, a few years ago, the Victor Adams plant, consisting of a knitting mill and paper box factory, located on the south side of East Mill street. The company is engaged in the manufacture of knit underwear and paper boxes, and does an extensive business.

The Rockton Knitting Mill.—This company is also known as Whitman Bros., Walter W. and Rodney Whitman composing the firm. They do a large business in the manufacture of knit underwear, sweater coats and gloves.

The Riverside Knitting Mill.—This mill is operated by Rugene Walrath in the manufacture of men's and boys' balbriggan under-

PROFILE ROCK.

wear and sweater coats. It is located on Mohawk street, just east of the old Warrior mower building.

The Barnet Leather Company.—This company carries on a large tanning business in the manufacture of a high grade of calf skins. It gives employment to a large number of skilled workmen, and is one of the largest establishments of its kind in the country, and turns out annually an immense product. Its buildings are located on East Mill street. This company also controls the tannery buildings located on Upper Church street.

The Little Falls Felt Shoe Company does a large business in the manufacture of felt shoes. Its building is located on the south side of West Main street, the building being formerly a part of the Titus Sheard Co.'s plant.

H. P. Snyder Co. Machine Works manufactures knitting machinery and bicycles. It gives employment to a large number of mechanics and has a large annual output.

Jacob Dettinger.—This firm is now owner and occupant of the saw mill property of the late Daniel W. Ladue. In connection with the saw mill, Mr. Dettinger manufactures wooden packing cases and cheese boxes, and also runs a cider mill.

The Henry Cheeney Hammer Co. does an extensive business in the manufacture of all kinds of high grade hammers, its product being sold all over the United States and in foreign countries. Its factory is located on West Mill street.

Andrew Little & Son are dealers in all kinds of lumber, and also own and operate the William B. Houghton & Son planing mill, located on the south side of Mill street. They do sawing, planing

and matching of lumber, turning and various kinds of wood working.

The Valley Mills, James Van Allen, proprietor, do a general milling business and all kinds of custom grinding. The mills are located on the south side of Mill street. This mill was owned and operated a number of years ago by Charles B. S. Fonda.

The Charles Becker Shoddy Mill.—This firm occupies the old stone building, formerly the old Valley flouring mill building, on Mill street, in the manufacture of shoddy and waste, and does an extensive business.

The Howard Lyke Machine Works builds special machinery and tools and does general machinery repair work. Works located on the north side of Mill street.

Stafford & Holt.—This firm manufactures a high grade of knitting machines and does a large business, both in domestic and export trade. Factory located on the south side of Mill street.

The C. J. Lundstrom Company.—This company purchased and is now occupying the old Saxony knitting mill property on the south side of Mill street. The company manufactures book cases and filing cabinets and does a large mail order business.

The Little Falls Fiber Company.—This company is located on East Mill street, manufactures cotton and upholstering batts, mattress felts and shoddies. The company has mills also at Johnstown, N. Y., and does an extensive business in its line.

Bertram Adams, manufacturer of wooden packing cases, and other kinds of wood working. Factory located on East Mill street, just west of the Zoller packing company building.



The Jacob Zoller Company, situated on the south side of East Mill street, are large packers of pork; also dealers in meats and country produce. The company operates a cold storage plant in connection with its meat business. Its products find an extensive sale.

The Little Falls Paper Company.—This company manufactures a fine grade of toilet paper. The factory is situated on the north bank of the Mohawk river and at the extreme end of East Mill street, and the company does a large business. It was formerly the plant of E. B. Waite & Co.

The Adirondack Woolen Mill.—This mill is situated on the north bank of the Erie canal and on the south bank of the Mohawk river on Moss island. The company manufactures all grades of shoddy and does an extensive business. It is the largest concern of its kind in the country.

The Dingman Company.—This company is newly organized and is located in the old Warrior mower building on the south side of the Mohawk river. The company manufactures cotton and upholstering batts and mattress felts.

The Rock Island Paper Mill.—This mill is operated by Perry Kingston, successor to William Kingston & Co., and manufactures a high grade of building paper and does a large business. Mills situated on Mohawk street, and south of the Mohawk river.

M. Reddy's Sons Foundry and Machine Shop.—This is one of the oldest industries in Little Falls. It was founded by Michael Reddy a great many years ago, and is now operated by Mr. James Reddy, a son of the founder. Buildings located on the south side of the Mohawk river, on Mohawk street.

Vincent Mattress Factory.—This factory is located on Southern avenue and is owned and operated by Frank Vincent in the manufacture of high grade mattresses and is doing a successful business.

The P. W. Casler Company.—These works are situated on the south side of Southern avenue and the north bank of the Erie canal, and this business was founded by the late Philo W. Casler. A saw mill and desk factory was operated in connection with it. The property is now owned and controlled by the P. W. Casler company.

Astoronga Paper Mills.—These mills are located on West Main street at the west end of the city. They manufacture a high grade of tissue paper. The concern does a large and growing business, and is now erecting a large addition to its plant in order to accommodate an increased demand for its product.

The Livingston Shirt Waist Factory.—This is one of Little Falls' newer industries. Its factory is located on East Main street. The principal product is the manufacture of ladies' shirt waists and suits. The company is doing a large and growing business.

Henry Dunteman.—Mr. Dunteman is successor to the late Charles Benedict, and occupies the Benedict shops on Mary street, carrying on the manufacture of wagons and sleighs; also doing general repairing. Mr. Dunteman entered the employ of the late Charles Benedict 46 years ago, and has ever since worked in these shops, both in the capacity of employee and owner.

J. R. Parry.—On Albany street are the works of J. R. Parry, builder of carriages and sleighs, and who also does general repair work. Mr. Parry was once a partner of Henry Dunteman.

Daniel J. Cooney, Harness and Saddlery.—These shops are situated on the south side of Albany street. This business was

founded a great many years ago by the father of the present owner, and was always noted for the superior quality of its work.

A. Strobel, nickel plating and machine repairing, located on the south side of Albany street and east of the D. J. Cooney harness works.

G. F. Andrews, wagons and sleighs and general repairing, does an extensive business. Located on the west side of Second street, in the building formerly owned and operated as a wagon shop by Quackenbush Bros.

Fred Ostrander, owner and operator of the Hosiery Mills bearing his name, situated on the south side of West Main street. This mill is already noted for the high class of its output.

The Stacey Company.—This company has a large cold storage plant; also dealers and handlers of cheese and other dairy products. Large five story building located on the south side of West John street, near the N. Y. C. freight depot.

The Stafford Warehouse Co.—This establishment supplies a long needed want in the business life of our city. It is located in the west end of the city, on the south side of West Main street, and does a general warehouse business.

Little Falls has two stone crushing plants, one on the south and one on the north side of the Mohawk river. The plant on the south side of the river is now inactive. The one on the north side of the river, the Syenite Trap Rock company, is doing a large and prosperous business.

Other of our shops that form quite a part of our city's activities are the following:

George Clifton, blacksmithing and general repairing, located on the south side of Albany street, east of Second street.

Conyne & Brierly, blacksmithing and general repair work, located on the west side of Second street in the building formerly occupied by P. A. Conyne in similar work. This is one of the oldest institutions of its kind in our city.

R. Baskin.—The shop is situated in the basement of the building now occupied by George F. Andrews, on the west side of Second street. Mr. Baskin does blacksmithing and general repair work.

W. F. McLoughlin.—Shop on the north side of John street, and just west of the Rockton hotel. Blacksmithing and general repair work.

J. C. Donovan.—Shop located on the north side of West Mill street, near the large MacKinnon knitting mill. Blacksmithing and general repair work; also building of wagons and sleighs.

B. E. Reina, blacksmith shop, located on the south side of the river; successor to Amos Wormuth, does blacksmithing and general repair work.

George D. Gibbs & Co. tin shop; also carries on the business of a general dealer in stoves, tinware, etc. Located on the corner of Main and Ann streets.

D. T. Lamb, tin shop; also carries on the business of a general dealer in stoves, tinware, etc. Located on the north side of Main street, east of Second.

Lower Metal and Supply Co., N. G. Lower, manufactures a high grade of needle and babbitt metal and boiler compound. Factory located on the north side of Mill street.

Theodore Fallis manufactures a high grade of cigars. Factory at 37 West Main street.

Sanford W. Farmer manufactures a high grade of cigars. Factory at 631 East Main street.

Little Falls has three plumbing shops, viz.: John F. Leary com-

pany, F. W. Ashenhurst and Malone & O'Rourke. They all do a general plumbing, steam and gas fitting business.

The wages paid to labor in Little Falls exceeds \$3,000,000, and the annual output under normal conditions approximates \$10,000,000.



# THE VOLUNTEER FIREMEN

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There was a social and political side to the volunteer fire departments which deserves much more than a passing notice. Fire is always a dread monster, and a good fireman is first of all a hero—a man of courage and self-sacrifice. Of all the known dangers in the villages of old, the menace of fire was worst. None could tell when fire would strike and in a few hours wipe out the savings and labors of generations of able people.

As the fear of war in the Mohawk valley slowly disappeared after the war of 1812, the home-guards—the local companies of volunteer soldiers—gave way before the triumph of the more useful volunteer fire companies. There was a period, socially, when the home guards and the volunteer firemen disputed social honors, and when it was a question which were the more useful and more ornamental.

It was, seventy-five years ago, a great honor to be an officer in the Home Guards, and there were many social stratagems and much political finesse in the efforts to get appointed or chosen to membership and official place in the soldier companies. The volunteer fire companies gradually gained the higher hand, however, and from a time when every one was a home guard soldier there came a time when every one tried to belong to both, and, eventually, the home guards lost out. The volunteer firemen had more frequent opportunities to show their usefulness, for one thing.

The home guards might turn out once in a generation to an

alarm of war; they did have a general training once a year—a day on which everybody from the whole region came to town, with ginger-bread in hand, to see the home guards train. It was a great and heroic day.

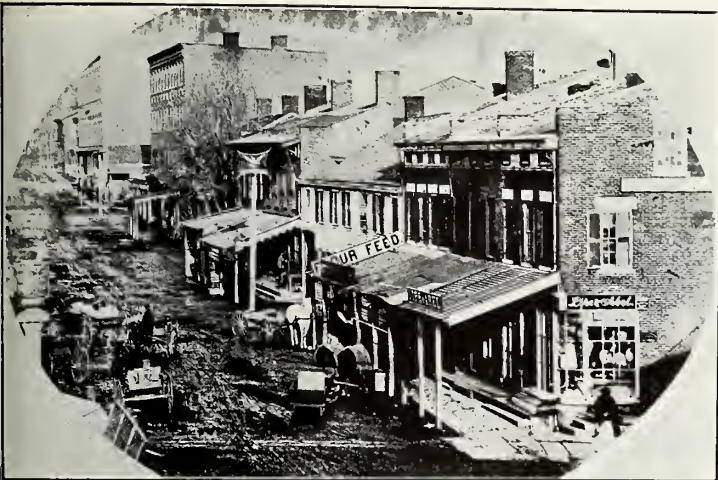
The volunteer firemen, however, never knew what minute they would be called to man the fire engine and, before the eyes of all the people, rush literally to the rescue of the town.

The soldiers might fight in Mexico—many did—but the firemen worked at home, where everyone watched and cheered them. Any young man with spunk desired to be among the firemen, with work to do a dozen times a year. The wires were pulled for place on the fire rolls, and there were no more bitter political fights in the history of Little Falls than those that related to the personnel of the various fire companies. The charter of 1850 contains the significant restriction:

“The number of fire engines not to exceed one for two thousand inhabitants, and one additional engine for every fifteen hundred inhabitants over two thousand.”

In their eagerness to have fire companies to belong to, there might have been a disposition on the part of some to have the village buy more fire apparatus than was desirable to have. The village, after incorporation, bought fire apparatus, but there were independent companies which seem to have furnished their own





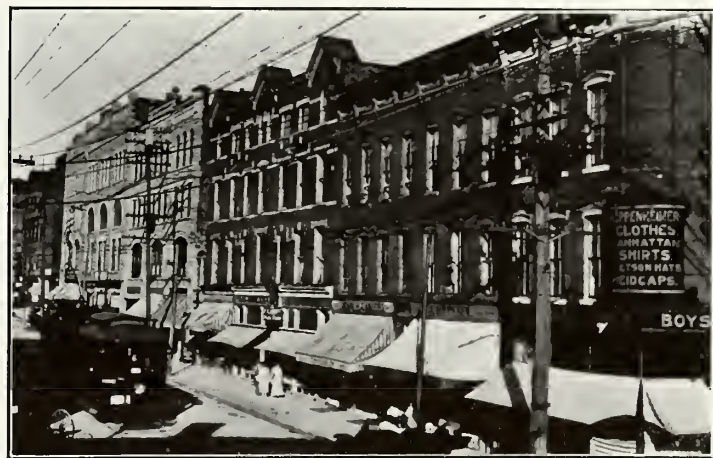
COR. MAIN AND SECOND STREETS, IN WAR TIMES.

apparatus. This was because of the common political failing that favors the friends at the expense of the opponents of the successful local government. It may be surmised that when the fire alarm sounded, there was a rush on all sides, each man to his own company—there were rivalries of a most healthy kind, such as the first line playing on the fire, first man to the roof, etc.

But there were other rivalries—the social rivalries which led to political work of the hardest sort—and the South Side company had to fight for a hose house as hard as ever a ward now fights for an improved street or park clean-up.

It was a man's task, belonging to the fire company. The ones who did not show up at a fire were not only black-marked on the company records, but they felt the resentment of the ladies no less sharply—perhaps more sharply. None dared flunk in the presence of peril when the fire was burning. It was a case of not only getting honorable place by political, social and ability prowess, but it was a case, afterwards, of proving one's worth. None who failed could remain. The honor of the companies was too precious to jeopardize by unfit membership.

For years the chief of the firemen was elected on a vote of the whole fire department, so important was the office in political and



COR. MAIN AND SECOND STREETS, PRESENT TIME.

social circles. Thus in 1853, Edmund G. Chapin was elected, succeeding W. I. Skinner, and he was in turn succeeded by Lorenzo D. Waite (1850).

Some of the old companies were the Hercules, Asturongan, Cascade, No. 1 (hand engine), Protection, No. 2 (hand engine), Gen. Herkimer, No. 3 (hand engine), Rescue Hook and Ladder Co., No. 4, and later, Chemical Engine Co., No. 5.

Later on came the introduction of the steam fire engine, the first one belonging to No. 1 company and named the "Gen. Z. C. Priest", then "Protection" No. 2, then the "C. B. Leigh" of company No. 3.

After the construction of the village water works the department was reorganized into hose companies and we had "Victor Adams" No. 1, "J. D. Feeter" No. 2, "Bailey Hose" No. 3, afterwards the "H. W. Warren", "Rescue" Hook and Ladder company No. 4, Chemical Engine company No. 5, and later the "Charles King" Hose company No. 6.

There were jealousies and heart-burnings without number—and any old volunteer will recall incidents innumerable that now seem laughable, but which at that time started things to happening. Consider the frame of mind of the firemen after the fire of February 19, 1877, when they came to consider the fact that some one had set fire to No. 2 engine house, at the corner of Second and Albany streets, destroying hundreds of dollars worth of their property.

Then imagine the feelings of No. 1 boys at their first trial with their new steamer, the Z. C. Priest, dear to the memories of volunteer firemen. The engine came on September 20, 1871. It cost \$3400, and at the test, when the maker was present, it did noble work. Then on October 20, which was the annual parade day, the

new engine, and the old No. 2 hand engine, had a test of speed to see which could lay a line most quickly. No. 1 boys were the quickest—they had unreeled 400 feet of hose when they discovered that they had it unreeled wrong end to. The couplings didn't match, and they had to reverse the lines in order to couple on. Their pride was somewhat humbled.

On another occasion there was a fire and the steam fire engine idea was comparatively new. The fire engine arrived at the scene on time, but they had forgotten to light the fire in the box, and so they lost much time waiting to get up steam, while the jeering hand engine men threw streams on the blaze long before the steamer was warm—the hand-engine men never could quite get over the idea that no steam fire engine could do as well as the old time fire laddies and their big arms, at the pumps.

The annual balls of the firemen, their annual parade, their lotteries, sales, meetings, picnics and doings of all kinds were the great social events of the year. They occupied the place held in later years by the various secret societies, the country clubs and similar exclusive organizations.

Where is the old time fireman of the early 70's whose memory doesn't carry him back to the time that the big hearted Chief "Jim" Levee used to march all the companies, at the close of the annual trainings, to his house on Western avenue and fill them up on one of those old-fashioned, home-made banquets, or "suppers", with the band playing "Yankee Doodle" while the boys were filling their bread baskets with pumpkin pie and other goodies and arguing excitedly over the question of which engine threw the highest stream at the afternoon contest in the park or at the old "Basin" where Clinton park now is?

The affection with which the members regarded their companies, the vim with which they entered into contests with one another and with companies from neighboring places, and the real patriotic spirit with which they faced the terribly real peril of flame and smoke, are largely matters of memory and tradition now, the energies having been diverted into the thousand and one channels that absorb the attention of public and private men.

#### PAID FIRE DEPARTMENT ESTABLISHED.

Notwithstanding the efficient service so long performed by the excellent volunteer firemen, the rapid growth of the city and the enlargement of its manufacturing establishments made it more and more apparent that more modern methods were needed in the interest of safety in handling large conflagrations, or rather in preventing the same. It was realized that men always on duty and with apparatus fully equipped could get to a fire more quickly than volunteers scattered over the mile-square city, and that the early minutes at a fire were the important ones. The matter of establishing a paid department had been long discussed, but long delayed, chiefly owing to a sentimental reluctance on the part of the people towards parting with an institution—the volunteer fire department—which had so long proved its worth in times of need and been such a factor in the social life of the place, but conditions arose in the spring of 1899 which made a change of some kind imperative. At first it was thought best to make a temporary re-organization of the volunteer department, but after some unsuccessful efforts in that direction, the Board of Fire and Police, consisting of Mayor Timothy Dasey, president, and Commissioners James T. Leigh, vice president; F. G. Teall, S. J. Waters and Harry H. Ballard, to establish a modern paid department, and on the first day of June, 1899, the important change took place.

A team of horses was purchased and these, with a good substantial hose wagon that had for some time belonged to the city, were located in temporary quarters fitted up in the livery at the corner of Main and William streets, and four paid men, with sleeping apartments overhead in the same building, were placed on duty.

Chemical Engine Co., No. 5, which did not disband immediately when the other volunteer companies went out of service, supplied call firemen, and the new department as thus constituted, under Chief George G. Gibbs, successfully met all demands made upon it for several months. But this arrangement was of necessity only temporary and the need of more suitable quarters and better facilities was soon apparent. A contract was made with the owners of the property at the corner of Second and Albany streets for the erection of a modern fire and police headquarters, after plans drawn up by an architect employed by the Fire and Police Board. This building was rushed to completion and on January 1st, 1900, the department was comfortably housed in modern quarters and was gradually supplied with all the equipments to facilitate up-to-date service. Chief Gibbs, who had served efficiently for a long time under the volunteer department, and who had rendered such valuable service in aiding to establish the new department, resigned in the fall of 1899, and First Assistant I. M. Oppel became acting chief until May, 1900, when Mr. Edward J. Cooney, the present efficient chief, was appointed, with permanent headquarters in the building. Under his administration every detail tending to bring the service to the highest state of proficiency has been intelligently and diligently worked out.

The third horse has been added to the service at headquarters, as well as a police patrol wagon and an ambulance.



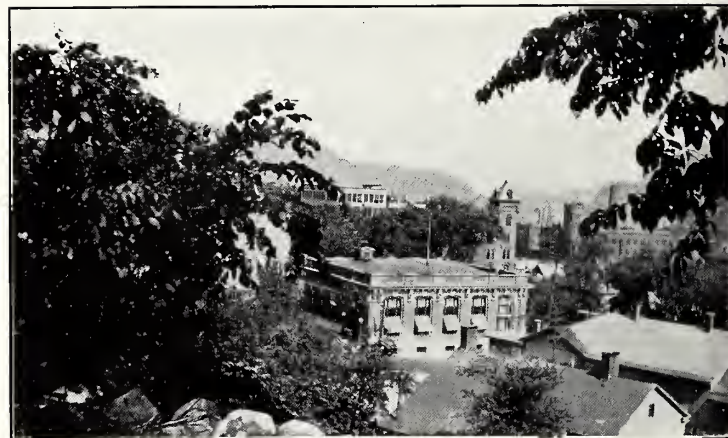
A modern combination hook and ladder and chemical wagon was shortly put in service, drawn to fires by contract teams. Later an emergency hose wagon was stationed in permanent quarters in a building belonging to the city, on Mohawk street, for additional protection to property south of the Central railroad and river, with night team service.

The electric fire alarm system covers the city with 29 call boxes, announcing the alarm on a register at headquarters and blowing the box number from the throat of a powerful siren whistle, operated by compressed air, on the tower of the building.

Four men are constantly on day duty at headquarters, while eight occupy sleeping quarters there. This force, supplemented by twelve regular call firemen, in connection with the equipment mentioned, has given the city a fire protection which the records show is exceeded by no place of anywhere near its size in the country.

While some opposition, chiefly from a sentimental standpoint, was manifested against starting a paid department, the wisdom of

the change is now admitted by all, and its strongest opponents at the start are now among its warmest admirers.



POSTOFFICE BUILDING, FROM PROSPECT STREET.



# VILLAGE AND CITY GOVERNMENT

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It was a strong-arm government in the early days. Every man had to look out for himself. The ablest man, physically, would win if the weaker man was not able by craft to overcome the other's brute strength. It was Indian against Indian, Indian against white man, and then white man against white, clear down to the Revolutionary war.

Yet the law advanced steadily from the coming of the Palatines. The coming of the surveyors meant the first demarkation between the possessions of men, always excepting the dividing line between the Mohawk and Oneida tribes, which was a blazed trail that came across the Mohawk valley and was identified by the Astenegroen rocks in the stream. Thus even the Indians had their laws among the tribes, and between individuals, and this code affected the procedure here in Little Falls before white men saw it. But, generally speaking, there was no law here for white men until the Indians were gone.

The first specimen of law enforcement that has come down is seen in the warning sent to Johan Jost Petri by the Colonial Governor, Amherst, forbidding the crowding of the king's highway. Lands were more precious than men, furs more valuable than the lives and morals of whole nations of Red Men, and profit more to be considered than justice. In the wilderness at Little Falls, only the individual's sense of honor, sense of justice, sense of greed and opportunity, tempered always by fear and the impending hereafter, restrained him or gave him free and selfish hand.

It is in the civic government of Little Falls that one sees most clearly the progress that two hundred and fifty years have brought about at Astenegroen, through the Little Carrying Place down to the Little Falls of today. Visibly, the first sight of delegated power here was doubtless some under-sheriff from Sir William Johnson on his way to compel observance of some ordinance of the king. This was backed up by soldiers, no doubt, for there was the king's house here at the Falls where Sir William's furs and trade goods were kept safely.

But of those intensely interesting days when the law's visits were as infrequent as they were spectacular, there is but little remembered. There was a peace force here during the Revolution—soldiers who guarded the old grist mill against Indians and who, no doubt, restrained the spree-going when they became too violent for the peace of the others here. After the war there came definitely a form of government, which showed itself clearly in the administration of John Porteous, beginning in the year 1790. No doubt there was a resident deputy sheriff, and he would compel peace of a kind. But there was no such peace as it is in these days of Chief Long and his husky cops.

We know that there were tavern brawls, and that in these the returned Tories, cowering in the knowledge that they had been whipped in war, were pummelled and mobbed and driven back into the wilderness. There was no protection for the little enemies of



PRESENT FIRE DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS.

the nation, but for the wealthy Tories—for the Ellices and their kind, who would spend money among the Patriot politicians who had not yet been taught that of all evils in a government nothing is worse than justice on sale in the market place. There was protection and favor even at the expense of the fighting Patriots. The men in high places, the congressmen, senators, assemblymen, down through the local representatives of law were for sale—openly and blatantly for sale. If this had not been so, the early story of Little Falls would not have been one of long years of repression and subjugation. There is no more significant passage in the history of Little Falls than that one in Benton's History of Herkimer County which tells how the New York state legislators black-mailed the landlords for profit, instead of driving them out of the country as a matter of patriotic duty and principle.

The records of Little Falls from 1811 to 1826, inclusive, seem to be lost. There were local officials, but who they were or what they did the books do not state. It seems likely that when they went out of office they took with them the minutes of their doings for fear of ill-fame should their work in office be known. At the bottom of destroyed public records is generally the fear of wrong-doers that they will be exposed, if not punished. The village officials were in office by grace of the Ellice proprietorship and there was nothing in that to admit them to honorable place in history.

With the charter of the year 1827 came a public administration, and from that time one may discover the names of about every one who drew on the public for political place or money. It has always been that men have felt it an honor to be selected by the voters to serve as public officials. Some of the highest offices have been without pay, without profit in money, but with the far greater profit of a good name among one's own people. Certain it is that

the hard work of being public officials, doing public tasks without recompense in money, has always found willing hands to do it and the significance is clear. A true American longs for the esteem and approbation of his fellow citizens; so there has been no difficulty in filling difficult offices with the city's most capable men who worked for the good name. Perhaps the hard part of old time history in Little Falls is the pitiful fact that there have been men who tried to wear the honors of high office, while they secretly tried to make profit when profit was shameful; perhaps the worst of these were the men who bought "honor" by permitting evil men to graft. They were far more dangerous than those who, grafting themselves, could be gotten rid of when discovered.

The evil phase of village government was at times more conspicuous than the good of it. There was a period when, tradition says, the village authorities connived in and shared in the stealing of horses and robbing of the weak; when the village marshal was a boss cattle thief—but that was scores of years ago. The time when scallawagery in municipal officials passed unrebuked went by long ago.

We know that Eben Britton, in behalf of the inhabitants of Little Falls, received the guarantee of Asa Cady on September 29, 1810, that the fire engine delivered on that date was free from imperfections, showing that Britton was a head man in the unorganized village. There was some kind of representative government in the hamlet, even before the charter days.

Then came the mysterious years of 1811-27, and in late May, 1827, the first election held in the stone school house under the new charter resulted in: Nathaniel S. Benton, president, and Trustees Christopher P. Bellinger, William Girvan, S. Andrews, A.



Lansing, S. Andrews Lansing, J. Argos Sanders, Gould Wilson and John McMicgael. The fire wardens were Robert Stewart, Jacob Abcon and John Phillips. Henry Alexander was treasurer, and Jere Eaton collector of the \$100 which the village was permitted to raise. Then the fire department was organized.

The change from a proprietorship to a self-government was marked instantly in the history of the village. It was shown in the erection of many new buildings—of churches, watch tower, pest house (hospital for smallpox, yellow fever patients, etc.), development of water power and many other things, which show how very clear is the relation between unfair practices in government and stultification in average business practices. A place cannot be developed freely and to its utmost if the highest power in politics is selfish and greedy, as was the Ellice proprietorship.

The late twenties and early thirties were boom years in Little Falls—the canal helped, the public spirit improved steadily, active participation in political matters extended to all classes of citizens, and from that time till 1850 the story of Little Falls politics and government is a reading pleasant to those who believe the people grow better and abler.

Then there was a curious sentiment that "Little" in the village name meant diminutive—meant that it wasn't a place like Cohoes, the Great Falls. Anyhow, the charter of 1850 changed the name of Little Falls to Rockton and for all time fastened the nick-name of "Rocky City" on the place in the gorge. There were able citizens who saw that the change was a ridiculous one, and two years later the name was changed back to Little Falls, greatly to the satisfaction of conservative people who realized that changing the name of the place in the beginning had resulted in confusion and ridicule.

As time went on, the village grew—how fast and in what periods is shown in the following table, from The Official Red Book, compiled by former City Clerk James G. Hazlett, and Fire Chief Cooney in 1907: 1802—Between six and seven hundred. 1831—1200. 1833—1602. 1840—2781. 1842—3000. 1855—4098. 1861—5000. 1866—6000. 1880—8000. 1895—8783. 1900—10,381. 1905—11,122. 1910—12,270.

The events that compelled the changing from a village to a city government were many. Previous to the city charter, the village was distributed in three towns, Manheim, Danube and Little Falls. There were repeated conflicts of authority, especially with regard to the assessments, maintenance of highways, bridges, etc.

After the water-works were put in, in 1885-8, after the great undertaking of the village to provide itself with ample fresh, pure water—conditions grew insufferable. Town politicians made themselves a burden on the place which was in fact a city, and entitled to a charter. The demand for a city charter appeared insistently in the village.

Opposition to the charter idea came from the towns which were to lose part of their territory and a good deal of tax money, and from the other towns which were afraid that if Little Falls received a city charter, it would have too many supervisors, and that the city of Little Falls, with more than 8,000 inhabitants, might have more influence in the county board of supervisors than some of the small towns with almost as many voters as Little Falls had on any one of half a dozen of its streets.

In fact, the opposition had so much influence that they were heard at Albany, and Governor Flower vetoed the first charter, but finally, on May 8, 1895, the city charter was signed, but not till the



city accepted two supervisors instead of four, and to this day Little Falls, with more than 2400 voters has no more votes in the board of supervisors than some towns with less than 250 voters, or one-tenth the number in the city.

However, the city charter enabled the place to spend its own money, select its own local government, and provide for its own streets, bridges and other matters without interference by town officials or other outside authority.

Previous to the adoption of city government, the names and terms of village presidents, from 1827—the earliest date of which we have authentic records—to and including 1904, were as follows:

1827—Nathaniel S. Benton.	Aug. 12, 1847; Richard N. Casler
1828—Nathaniel S. Benton.	appointed Aug. 18, 1847.
1829—John Dygert.	1848—Hiram Nolton.
1830—John Dygert.	1849—George H. Feeter.
1831—Arphaxed Loomis.	1850—George H. Feeter.
1832—Arphaxed Loomis.	1851—Nelson Rust.
1833—Arphaxed Loomis.	1852—William Brooks.
1834—H. P. Alexander.	1853—Zenas C. Priest.
1835—H. P. Alexander.	1854—Henry Link, appointed,
1836—Arphaxed Loomis.	(Jarvis N. Lake elected), J. N.
1837—Jesse C. Dann.	Barber appointed.
1838—M. W. Priest.	1855—Thomas Burch, (Joseph
1839—Jesse C. Dann.	W. Helmer, appointed).
1840—M. W. Priest.	1856—J. N. Barber.
1841—M. W. Priest.	1857—James Feeter.
1842—Robert Stewart.	1858—Seth M. Richmond.
1843—G. B. Youngs.	1859—Seth M. Richmond.
1844—M. W. Priest.	1860—Seth M. Richmond.
1845—Frederick Lansing.	1861—Seth M. Richmond, re-
1846—Frederick Lansing.	signed, Robert Casler appointed
1847—M. W. Priest, resigned	January 14, 1862.

1862—M. W. Priest.	1878—Isaac B. Richmond.
1863—M. W. Priest.	1879—Isaac B. Richmond.
1864—M. W. Priest.	1880—Henry Link.
1865—M. W. Priest.	1881—Isaac B. Richmond.
1866—M. W. Priest.	1882—Kendrick E. Morgan.
1867—Mount M. Abel.	1883—Isaac B. Richmond.
1868—John P. Sharer.	1884—J. J. Gilbert.
1869—John P. Sharer.	1885—J. J. Gilbert.
1870—John P. Sharer.	1886—J. W. Baker.
1871—John P. Sharer.	1887—George F. Crumby.
1872—M. W. Priest.	1888—Isaac B. Richmond.
1873—M. W. Priest.	1889—Charles L. Petree.
1874—Willard A. Stafford, re-	1890—Isaac B. Richmond.
signed. Watts T. Loomis ap-	1891—J. J. Gilbert.
pointed April 4, 1874.	1892—Albert Story.
1875—S. Stewart Lansing.	1893—Horace G. Babcock.
1876—S. Stewart Lansing.	1894—Charles King.
1877—Jonah May.	

#### BEGINNING OF CITY GOVERNMENT.

In accordance with the provisions of the new charter, Charles King, who was serving as village president at the time of its adoption, became the first mayor, and Peter A. Conyne, James D. Clark, James B. Donovan, Horace Buchanan, Squire Bailey, John Crowley, Sr., James T. Leigh and George D. Waterman, who were serving terms as village trustees, were created aldermen, thereby forming the first common council of the new city of Little Falls, their terms expiring May 28, 1895, at which time the first election under the new charter was held. At this election the following officers were elected:

Charles King, mayor; term, one year.  
Aldermen—

First Ward, one year, George D. Waterman.

First Ward, two years, Abraham L. Whiting.

Second Ward, one year, Edward Hurley.

Second ward, two years, Ivan T. Burney.

Third Ward, one year, Malvin B. Cook.

Third Ward, two years, John Sellman.

Fourth Ward, one year, Robert Currie.

Fourth Ward, two years, George D. Gibbs, (resigned), James France.

The elected mayors have been:

1895-6—Charles King.

1897-89—Timothy Dasey.

1900—Hadley Jones.

\*1901-02-03—Edward H. Kingsbury.

1904-05—Edgar H. Douglas.

1906-07—Dr. A. B. Santry.

1908-09—Rugene Walrath.

1910-11—Timothy Dasey.

\*In 1901 an amendment to the city charter extended the mayor's term to two years.



RICHMOND HOTEL.

# CANALS AND RAILROADS

Artificial Navigation Agitated.

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As long as the river navigation was in mere canoes, the white people merely swore at the Little Falls carry. It was easy enough to land a canoe load of trade stuffs in packs at the lower landing, and then carry the duffle to the upper landing, and go singing on the way—if the Dutch and English fur-traders sang.

But long before the War of the Revolution, the traffic on the river had become so heavy that it was a visible loss in time and profit to make the Little Falls carry on every trip up and down the river. While the cargoes were expensive furs, light to tote, and easy to pack securely, there was no dream of a change at the Little Carry which would permit the canoes to swim around the falls, but with the coming down of the German Flatts wheat, with the going up of heavy cannon, ammunition and other supplies, the drain on profits at the Little Falls loomed heavily in every transaction.

Such was the spirit of the people who came to settle in the New World that they faced intelligently all the questions presented to them by nature. Doubtless, for a long time, the talk of settlers and traders led to the question of digging a "sluice" around the falls at the Little Carry, but so far as known, the first mention of the matter in formal manner was when Sir Henry Moore, in a message to the Colonial Assembly, stated that "the obstruction of navigation in the Mohawk river, between Schenectady and Fort Stanwix, occasioned by the falls of Canajoharie, had been constantly com-

plained of, and that it was obvious to all who were conversant in matters of this kind, that the difficulty could be easily remedied by sluices, upon the plan of those in the great canal of Languedoc in France, which was made to open a communication between the Atlantic ocean and the Mediterranean."

Probably the first European who saw the Little Falls recognized the opportunity there for digging a canal. In 1825, when the Erie was opened there was much discussion as to who first had the idea of a canal in the Mohawk valley at Little Falls—the inception of the Erie-Hudson canal, but the matter could not be settled. It was an idea that grew with the need.

Before the Revolutionary war, Washington considered the matter of improved inland communication, and the war was only two years over when, in 1784, he came to the Mohawk valley and investigated the matter of a Mohawk valley boat route, improved by locks at the Little Falls. He foresaw the necessity of swift and intimate inter-communication if the American people be kept a united nation, and he urged the development that early brought Little Falls to national attention—the canal around the Falls.

Christopher Colles of New York, as early as 1782, delivered a lecture in Philadelphia on the need and desirability of developing lock navigation on the Mohawk, and thirteen years later, the New

York legislature allowed him \$125 for investigating and describing the idea of inland navigation up the Mohawk. It was too large an idea for the state's finances, staggered as they were by the drain of the war. Finding the idea of a public canal too large, he, in the same year, 1785, proposed a company to improve navigation between Oswego and Albany—perhaps as large an idea as had come to any American at that time.

In 1786, the people began to see something of his good sense, but the task was beyond his powers of endurance, apparently. He ceased his ambition on the threshold of his success. Worn out, he quit, and five years later, when his idea had seeped into the heads of the legislators, the state legislature ordered the land commissioners to have the Mohawk valley to Wood creek "in Herkemer county" surveyed, estimate the cost of making canals, etc. In 1792, the report was made. In the same session, the Western Inland Navigation company was incorporated by the usual special act of legislature. Messrs. Adgate, Williams, Livingston and Barker were the most active legislators in the matter; the leading members of the company were General Schuyler, president, and Messrs. Eddy, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, Barent Bleecker, Elkanah Watson (who afterward tried to claim all the thunder of originating the canal idea) and Robert Bowne. The company proposed to improve the navigation clear to Seneca lake and Lake Ontario. Fifteen years were allowed them to construct the canals—the Little Falls sluice, over the divide, at Wood creek, one at German Flatts, etc.

By 1796 they had finished the canal around the cascade at Little Falls. But the work was so poorly engineered that it was necessary to rebuild it all under the guidance of a European engineer specialist, Weston. When all was done at last, more than \$400,000 had been spent, "and obliged them to charge such heavy

tolls that their canals were but little used; land carriage and the natural rivers being generally preferred."

So the canal around the Little Falls were something of a failure at the start, except that the public grew used, through them, to thinking of the subject of easier communication among all parts of the state—and in this way the state grew up to the idea of the Erie canal—the largest transportation idea of the country up to that time.

The company had too large a proposition before them. They had spent fortunes, without adequate return, and the country owed them much for their sturdy efforts. By 1808 they had to give up the part of their project west of Oneida lake, and a few years later, they gave up entirely.

In 1810 a committee was appointed to explore the route of a canal from the Hudson to Lake Erie, and the report, drawn up by Gouverneur Morris, was presented to the legislature in 1811. It seemed a possible, if not a feasible undertaking, to build a canal clear across the state, but the expense was appalling to consider. In 1817 President Madison conceived the idea that the national funds could not be used for the furthering of the project—evidently a political discovery, as national funds had been used in the same way in the south. New York went ahead on its own account, shaming the powerful southern cliques by doing the work itself, although they were beyond shame, for it was not long before they thought to tax canal boats for the national—or southern—benefit.

The war of 1812 had led to increased interest in the matter of communication—putting the war supplies for the Niagara frontier overland was a bitter task, and on July 4, 1817, digging on the canal began at Rome with some ceremony. Thereafter, reports on the





progress of the canal work were important features—perhaps the most important features of the public life of New York.

The easier places were attacked first. Ditches were run through clay and silt. Then attack was made on the more difficult stretches. Years before the Little Falls cut could be made, they were running boats west to Utica and Rome. It was expected it would take years to work through the Little Falls granite, and engineers dreaded the undertaking. In the midst of the work, however, the discovery of "sand blasting" was announced, and the Little Falls rocks were shot to pieces along the shelf on the south side. Way was made for the locks here, and in 1823, the Sallie and Mary, a boat of over 80 tons, was locked through on its journey from Hector, Tompkins county, to New York city.

"The old (Inland Navigation Co.) locks at the Falls," writes an old time enthusiast, "now form part of a communication from the Erie canal into the Mohawk river. When we stand on the lofty and magnificent stone aqueduct which is thrown over the falls, or on the terrace which supports the western canal—midway the precipitous rocks on the south side of the river, we look down on the old canal, passing below the new structure, creeping at our feet through its narrow channel and straightened locks".

From that time the Erie canal at Little Falls is one of the great triumphs of man's ingenuity, and looking back to it, even, and considering the tolls with which the work was done, and the difficulties of politics, expense, labor and what-not, Little Falls must always remain as one of the great land-marks in the story of American inland navigation, for here was a task that seemed insurmountable when the work was begun—and which as skill and ingenuity increased grew less and less difficult till the work could

be done with less trouble than had been taken on some of the other parts of the work at the beginning.

It was a great day for Little Falls when first the slow-plodding canal teams, in single file, trod eastward with the produce and salt of the west and westward with the manufactures of the east. It meant the casting off of the proprietor's strangle-hold shortly, and the development of the water power within a few years. The house in which General W. F. Lansing lives on Church street is, in a way, a monument to the new Little Falls, for it was the first house built after Ellice was driven out, following the opening of the Erie canal.

### IN THE CANAL DAYS.

The old Inland canal was a push-boat ditch on the north side of the Mohawk river. When the Erie canal came through, the south side route was taken as the most direct and easiest. The north side people, however, demanded that no advantage be given the south side, and the Ellice ownership, by furnishing the stone, succeeded in having the state build the aqueduct, across which could be towed canal-boat loads of goods, articles and supplies.

This aqueduct, one of the wonders of the canal, served to increase the importance of the north side, although the south side had the advantage of being on the through route. Very early, General Bellinger recognized his opportunity, and Little Falls became one of the three greatest canal supply depots on the Erie canal.

The number of locks necessary to surmount the 44 feet of water fall in the river, necessitated a long delay here, especially when the boats were coming in fast and faster than they could be locked through. The owners and travelers had to walk around, at times

waiting their turn to get through; horses were shod here, barns for caring for the teams, farm supplies—hay, feed, and the like—were stored handy to the Dewitt Clinton ditch, as it was called at first, in derision, and afterwards with fond emphasis.

The farmers came with their produce for shipment, and then factories and mills began to spring up, growing larger all the while because of the happy conjunction of transportation, food and power.

There came the concentration of capital in towing lines—companies organized to haul freight east and west. At Little Falls were located line barns, where teams were fed and changed, so that the boats could be kept moving behind relays of horses and drivers. At that time, only horses and mules were used, but the dream of steam power was rapidly being realized, and an occasional steamboat came plowing through, heralding a new force in the field.

Not all the travel was on the canal, however. The stage coaches were for the people who were in a hurry. They came galloping up the river road in clouds of dust—or surging heavily through the mud—and the horses were changed at the old stage coach tavern in the block on Main street between Ann and Second, or further east, at the corner of Main and William streets. The stages carried the mails, light goods and the people who could not wait. On the canal rode the leisurely travelers, and among the wonders of America these tourists saw were Lovers' Leap and Profile Rock, which have been oftener pictured than any other feature in Little Falls.

### THE RAILROADS COME.

In 1831, the Albany-Schenectady railroad was carrying 400 passengers a day, on an average—the railroad was a commercial

success. In 1834 a road was begun from Schenectady to Utica and in the summer of 1836, the road was completed. It brought a host of new citizens to Little Falls, more trade and quicker communication with the rest of the world. In the meanwhile, telegraph lines were built through the valley.

Of the first trains it is said they ran on wooden rails, and the canal packets could go almost as fast as the engines, but the railroad, as a transporter of passengers, soon left the canal far behind. Passenger traffic gradually left the slow boats and the time came when only freight was carried over the canal. It was found, however, that the canal was an easy rival of the railroad in taking produce to the markets, and it was a public governor, to hold in check the railroad spirit, which might come to say "The public be damned". It kept freight rates down, and it has been thought through enlargement after enlargement, worth while to keep the canal growing and improving in order to tame the greed of the railroads.

And while Little Falls profited largely from the construction of the original "DeWitt Clinton Ditch", with its four foot channel depth, permitting the passage of 80 ton boats, it was to experience a still further and greater benefit, when in 1840 the enlargement to a seven-foot channel allowed boats of 250 tons to navigate its waters. The same natural obstructions which hindered the building of the original canal had to be overcome with the expenditure of large sums of money and required the construction of the four large double locks. On both sides of most of these locks were built stores and supply depots, which for many years did a flourishing business in selling farm produce and merchandise of all kinds to the boatmen. For almost forty years the store on the upper lock at Little Falls did the largest canal supply business between Syracuse



and Albany. For many years all the coal used in this vicinity was brought here by canal, and later when steam navigation became an important factor, thousands of tons of coal were sold here annually to steamboats for fuel. The bricks, stone and lumber used in constructing nearly all the large manufactories in Little Falls was brought here on the canal, as well as hundreds of boat loads of other heavy merchandise.

### BEGINNING OF THE BARGE CANAL.

Although the enlarged Erie for many years did its share in making prosperity for the state and towns along its line, it is not to be wondered at that with the great improvement in railroad facilities and equipment the canals should again gradually lose their prestige, but with the decision of the people of the Empire state to again enlarge the waterways by building the great barge canal from parts of the old Erie and utilizing the rivers and other natural bodies of water, a renewal of waterway benefits to Little Falls must surely ensue, not only from the millions being spent in construction in this section, but in the revival of business along the line, when the docks and warehouses are completed and the great 1000-ton steam barges and the hundreds of smaller freight and passenger craft are plying its waters between the seaboard and lakes.

### GROWTH OF RAILROAD FACILITIES.

While the peculiarity of its situation in the gorge of the Mohawk renders it quite unlikely that Little Falls will ever become a great railroad center, it has nevertheless enjoyed a steady growth of railroad facilities since the first track of the old Utica and Schenectady railroad zig-zagged up through the valley. The double tracking of the Central and its subsequent four-tracking left lots of

money in the village and the increased facilities afforded by its completion served to encourage many new industries. Furthermore, the unusual prominence given Little Falls in railroad circles by reason of the life-long residence here of Gen. Z. C. Priest, who was connected with the Central from the time he began service by buying its original rights of way through the valley, then as one of its first conductors and through the remainder of his long and useful life as superintendent of the Albany and Syracuse division, was a wonderful factor in promoting the growth of the place. He worked for Little Falls with a vim that was unusual, even among the men who are fond of "home", and to this day, more than twenty years after his death, his memory is regarded with the respect which is the most desirable monument to the life of a capable and hard-working citizen, and which is the reward of the man who lives, not to gratify his own desires and ambitions, but to labor in the common cause of humanity. His public spirit was of great profit to the community. He made this place practically division headquarters, and he brought here uncounted thousands of dollars in railroad trade. At one time, there were more than five hundred railroad men, high paid and of superior class, resident in the village of Little Falls. It would be difficult to estimate the worth of such a man to the village.

In 1883 additional railroad facilities were given to the village by the opening of the West Shore railroad, which was put through on the south side. It had been in course of construction for two or three years, and owing to the difficult nature of the route through the village, the work required the expenditure of vast sums of money, from which the place again profited as before whenever works of this character were built. The building of this road through the village greatly changed the natural topography of the section it traversed. The advent of electric arc lights in the village





Little Falls, N. Y. High School.

was simultaneous with the building of this road, they being first used here to carry on the work of night construction, although the first street lighting contract was not actually let until September 30, 1891, after the project had been carried by a majority vote of the citizens.

In 1891, through the indomitable energy of Alfred Dolge, the Little Falls & Dolgeville railroad, a single track standard gauge road, was built along the bluffs north of the Central, through the farmlands of Manheim to the prosperous village of Dolgeville—later extended to Salisbury—thus putting Little Falls into direct touch with the busy commercial section in the northeastern part of the county.

The whirl of the electric trolley made its advent into the city in 1903, when the Utica and Mohawk Valley line was extended east from Herkimer, thus putting the city into direct trolley communication with the entire western and central section of the state, and was an event of the utmost importance to the commercial and social interests of the city.

And now, in this centennial year, a franchise has been granted and work begun on the construction of the Little Falls and Johnstown Electric railroad, which will connect the city, by way of Johnstown, with the electric lines of the eastern section of the state, thus giving complete trolley communication east and west.

Many changes in railroad conditions have taken place within the memory of the people of the present generation. Many years

ago the passenger depot was moved from the north side of the Central tracks, in the old Priest building, so familiar to older residents, to its present location on the south side, between Second and Ann streets from which the old freight house had been removed to its present location at the foot of Sixth street. When the river flats in the western part of the city shall have been raised in the near future, by the filling now being dumped there from the dredges engaged in deepening the Mohawk river for the barge canal, it is proposed by the Central railroad to erect a mammoth new freight depot and extensive yards for branch tracks that will give the city adequate facilities for meeting the needs of its growing manufacturing and commercial industries. The great concrete docks on the new barge canal will be located opposite this site on the south side of the river.

Great changes—mostly for betterment—have taken and are taking place in the avenues of travel and transportation leading in and out of Little Falls, notable among which is the elimination of the four locks in the present Erie canal and the substitution in place thereof, in the barge canal, at the eastern point of Moss Island, where it joins the Mohawk river, of a single mammoth concrete lock, being one of the highest and largest structures of its kind in the world. A picture of the front of this lock appears in this book.

What the future has in store, time will reveal, but these and a thousand other changes would astonish the souls of those first white men who, in the beginning, shared with the Indians, their catches of fish at the foot of the "Little Falls" in the Mohawk.

# CONSTITUTION OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT

## AND PRESENT CITY OFFICIALS, 1911

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### MAYOR:

Hon. Timothy Dasey. Elected November, 1909. Term, Two years.

### COMMON COUNCIL:

Aldermen are elected for two year terms; one from each ward annually.

First Ward—Michael Daley, Philip I. Grossman.

Second Ward—Sylvanus J. Waters, Dr. John M. Tanzer.

Third Ward—Cornelius Reardon, William T. McLaughlin.

Fourth Ward—James Walrath, F. F. Bronner.

Officers appointed by the Mayor, subject to confirmation of the Common Council:

City Clerk—Matthew A. Leahy.

City Attorney—Samuel H. Newberry.

### CITY TREASURER:

William Quackenbush. Elected November, 1910.

### CITY RECORDER:

Daniel W. Collins. Elected November, 1908.

### ASSESSORS:

One elected each year for three year term. George W. Boyle, Senior Mitchell, Bertram W. Casler.

### JUSTICES OF THE PEACE:

Two year terms. One elected annually. Guy L. Kretser, James A. Evans.

### SUPERVISORS:

Elected annually for two year terms.

First District; First and Fourth Wards—John McCauley.

Second District; Second and Third Wards—J. D. Frederiksen.

### CONSTABLES:

Elected annually. William M. Tubbs, Sylvanus L. Holmes, Daniel Flynn.

### SEALER OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES:

Appointed by the Mayor. Edwin Jones.

### MUNICIPAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION:

Appointed by the Mayor. Norman D. Olmstead, chairman;

William Watts, Jeremiah Crimmins. Timothy J. O'Brien, Clerk.

#### BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS:

Has charge of city streets, highways, bridges, waterworks, parks and cemeteries. The mayor is president ex-officio, but has no vote. The commissioners are appointed by the mayor subject to confirmation by the Common Council. They are appointed for four year terms, one annually. The present board consists of Commissioners Charles R. Conboy, vice president; James W. Collins, Edward H. Kingsbury, Irving E. Stacey.

City Engineer (appointed by the board)—O. J. Dempster.  
Office Clerk (appointed by the board)—Joseph Ryan, 2nd.  
Street Foreman (appointed by the board)—Thomas J. Ashe.

#### BOARD OF FIRE AND POLICE:

Appointed for four year terms, one annually.  
Commissioners—John F. Leary, vice president; Robert Nolan, Morris L. Cohn, Nelson E. Ransom.  
Chief Engineer Fire Department (appointed by the board)—Edward J. Cooney.  
Chief of Police (appointed by the board)—James J. Long.

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Since the early 70's when the old Little Falls Academy was incorporated into the public school system of the then village, and the schools put upon the graded system, progress toward a higher standard of efficiency has been steady and rapid, until at the present time, our schools occupy an enviable position in the records of the Regents department of the state. So high has the standing of the Little Falls public schools become that teachers from abroad

#### BOARD OF CHARITIES:

Commissioners appointed in same manner as other boards.  
Commissioners—George C. Fleming, John D. Murphy, Barney J. Shaut. (One vacancy.)  
Officers appointed by Charity Board:  
City Physician—Dr. Edward Jackson.  
Overseer of Poor—Richard N. Casler.

#### BOARD OF HEALTH:

Commissioners are appointed in the same manner as in other boards, except that it is not bi-partisan, and the mayor, who is its president, has a vote.  
Commissioners—Dr. A. B. Santry, vice president; James Dingman, William Van Allen, Jeremiah Nash, Dennis B. Reardon, George E. Moyer.  
Officers appointed by the board:  
Health Officer—Dr. William P. Earl.  
Plumbing Inspector—Joseph Shawcross.  
Sanitary Inspector—Philo Van Allen.  
Dorg-Ketcher—Andy Baldwin (resigned).

have considered their temporary employment here as one of their best recommendations for a higher position elsewhere.

Nearly every teacher now employed is either a graduate of college, normal school or some institution of special training.

#### THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

has always been composed of the city's best men, who never have



been stingy of their time or efforts in furthering the interests of education.

Present School Commissioners—David H. Burrell, Jr., president; Harry H. Ballard, James G. Burney, John Hurley, Ph. G., John B. Koetteritz, Eugene M. Walrath.

Superintendent of Schools—Prof. John R. DeCamp.

Clerk of the Board of Education—Henry C. Jones.

Librarian—Miss Mabel E. Richards.

## THE SCHOOLS.

### THE HIGH SCHOOL

Is a magnificent three story brick and brown stone structure, erected on the site of the Old Academy, at East Main, Alexander and Petrie streets, facing Ward Square. It is thoroughly modern, both architectually and in equipment, including gymnasium and library. The total value of site and building, including the Benton Hall grade school, which adjoins it on the Petrie street side, is \$150,000.

Principal—Prof. Lorraine W. Bills.

Regular Teachers—Eight.

Special Teachers—Four.

School Library—3500 volumes.

Total Registration, 1910-11—233 pupils.

### "BENTON HALL"

is the grade school located in that part of the High School building facing on Petrie street. It is so named in honor of the late Hon. Nathaniel S. Benton, one of Little Falls' most eminent citizens and scholars of former years.

Principal—Peter J. McManns.

Regular Teachers—Nine.

Number of Pupils—350.

### CHURCH STREET GRADE SCHOOL.

A modern three story brick structure, handsome in appearance and complete in all appointments, at the intersection of Church and Prospect streets, commanding a beautiful view for miles up and down the valley. This building occupies the site of the old "Octagon" church of ancient days. Value of site and building, \$60,000.

Principal—E. D. Henry.

Regular Teachers—Twelve.

Number of Pupils—461.

### JEFFERSON STREET SCHOOL.

This is a substantial brick and stone structure on the South Side. It was erected on the site of the old brick school that was torn down at the time of the opening of the West Shore railroad through the grounds. It has been kept fully up to date in its equipment and its capacity is usually tested to the utmost. Value of building and site, \$25,000.

Principal—Miss Rose A. Ellison.

Regular Teachers—Six.

Number of Pupils—229.

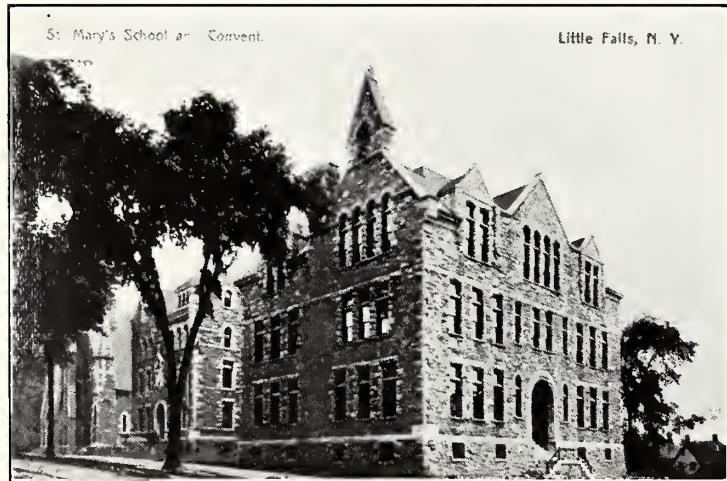
### PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS.

Since about 1855 a parochial school has been in existence under the direction of the trustees of St. Mary's Roman Catholic church. Prior to 1889 it had been conducted only intermittently under various teachers and methods, but about that time a substantial and handsome three story stone building was erected at a cost of about \$30,000. This institution was in all respects a modern and well equipped school, and for several years past has been under the

supervision of the State Board of Regents, the same as the public schools of the city. It is now known as

#### ST. MARY'S ACADEMY,

of which Rev. Edmund A. O'Connor is official principal, and the faculty consists of fifteen teachers, Sisters of the Order of St.



Joseph. During the past year two additional high school teachers have been added and a complete business college course incorporated in the curriculum. The enrolled attendance is about 700 pupils, and among its graduates are many of the city's brightest young men and women, as well as some of the most substantial business and professional men. At the present time the Academy building is

being entirely rebuilt and enlarged at a cost approaching the hundred thousand dollar mark, and when completed will be one of the finest school edifices in the state and a credit to the city as well as the society which owns and conducts it, and defrays the entire expense out of its own treasury.

#### ST. MARY'S CONVENT,

adjoining the academy building on the east side, recently completed at large cost, by the same church, is one of the city's most ornamental buildings and furnishes a permanent home for the teachers.

#### THE ROW OF HANDSOME BUILDINGS

consisting of the Academy, Convent, St. Mary's church, with its lofty spire and chime of twelve bells, and the Deanery adjoining on the east, all built of ornamental stone, of symmetrical design, and in the highest style of architectural art, facing John and East Main streets, comprise as pleasing a group of semi-public buildings as it is possible to find in few cities of the country.

## PUBLIC BUILDINGS

#### POSTOFFICE.

The first public building of importance to be erected in the city was the government building, used as a United States postoffice, located at the corner of West Main and Third streets, with a spacious lawn surrounding it. Through the efforts of Mr. Nelson E. Ransom, postmaster in the year 1905, Vice President James S. Sherman, the congressman from this district, became interested in securing an appropriation of \$50,000, and this was later increased by subsequent appropriations to the sum of \$85,000. The result was that in 1909 the handsome and commodious edifice, of pressed brick and cut stone, was opened to the public and Little Falls was pro-

vided with a postoffice that will amply meet the needs of the city for many years to come.

### ODD FELLOWS TEMPLE.

This beautiful building, facing on William street, between Main and Albany streets, was erected by Golden Gate Lodge, I. O. O. F.,



in the fall of 1909. It is constructed of brick, with a front of concrete and cut stone, in Ionic style of architecture, with mammoth cylindrical columns extending from ground floor to roof, giving it

an appearance both substantial and imposing. Its dimensions are about 60x86 on the ground, with basement, and two lofty stories above. On the ground floor are offices, spacious lobbies and stairways and a commodious assembly hall with a capacity of 1,000, equipped with stage and galleries, which is used for amusement and social purposes.

Above are located the well appointed lodge rooms, ante rooms, dining hall, kitchen, parlors, club rooms, etc., all used exclusively for fraternal and social purposes.

It is a monument to the zeal and energy of the local lodge of Odd Fellows and one of which any city may well be proud.

In nearly every community there are people whose efforts in life have been rewarded with a greater degree of success in a material way than their neighbors, and whose public spirit has prompted them to share with their less fortunate fellow citizens the benefits of their good fortune.

In this respect Little Fal's is able to point with pride to several worthy benefactions that have sprung into existence as the result of this philanthropic spirit.

### THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

For fifty years or more Little Falls has maintained a public and school library. At first in a small way in a room rented in a private house, afterwards in the old academy, and later in larger degree in the library room in the new high school building, where there are now shelved about 10,000 volumes of historical, scientific and classical works, as well as a variety of well selected fiction. By the terms of the will of the late Judge Rollin H. Smith, who died in February, 1911, his large, handsome brick residence situated on a lot fronting 96 feet on East Main street and 130 feet on Waverly Place, opposite Ward Square, one of the most convenient and desirable locations in

the city, is bequeathed to the city as a public library. Also included in this legacy is a sum of \$2000 for alterations and repairs to the property, a \$10,000 fund for maintenance, a rare and valuable collection of old china, his private library, consisting of about 1000 volumes, furniture, fixtures, etc. As the library trustees are also made residuary legatees under the terms of the will it is estimated that the total sum available for maintenance will approximate \$25,000. This, together with the site and building, will give Little Falls a \$50,000 free library property, exclusive of the value of the library itself.

The number of volumes in the present library in the high school building is approximately 10,000, of which about 3500 are scientific, historical and technical works, belonging to the state and school and will be left in the school library. About 6500 other books belonging to the city will shortly be moved to the new library building and these, with the 1000 volumes now in the Smith library, will form the nucleus for the new library.

In no more appropriate manner can our citizens voice their sentiments toward the memory of the generous donor of this munificent gift than in the words of Longfellow, when he wrote:

"So when a good man dies,

"For years beyond our ken

"The light it leaves behind him lies

"Upon the paths of men."

#### SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL BUILDING.

There is in course of erection on a commanding site on the east side of Jackson street, between Garden and Gansevoort streets, a building that will be unique in design and for the purpose to which it is to be devoted. No permanent name has yet been adopted for the building. At present its title and management are vested in the

board of trustees of the Presbyterian Church Society, but later may be changed to some other form, as it is understood that its uses are intended for the people of the whole city, regardless of church affiliations.

The structure will be 80 feet front by 110 feet in depth, a portion of it four stories high, and the remainder one story and basement, all built of re-inforced concrete, faced with ornamented brick.

The equipment will include an auditorium with a seating capacity of 1500, with stage and gallery, to be used for select entertainments, lectures and legitimate social and amusement purposes; dormitories, class rooms for industrial education, basketball arena, running track, bowling alleys, a complete gymnasium, kitchen, dining room, etc. In the basement will be shower baths and a mammoth swimming pool 47x17 feet with a maximum depth of eight feet, supplied with clean water of proper temperature for bathing at all seasons, and locker rooms for men and boys.

The purpose of this magnificent institution, as intended by its philanthropic founder, is for the social, moral and physical betterment, as well as the amusement of the young men and women of Little Falls, and no more useful or worthy project of a public character could be bestowed on any community.

This property is understood to represent an investment of upwards of \$60,000, the cost of which is borne by our most worthy public spirited citizen, Mr. D. H. Burrell.

The natural disinclination of the generous donor to court publicity by his benefactions makes it a difficult task to handle this matter as its importance to the community deserves. He has not been approached for facts, fearing a request on his part to have the matter ignored, and the compilers of this book preferred to present





LITTLE FALLS HOSPITAL.

such meager details as have been given rather than risk an injustice to the public, as well as Mr. Burrell, by having to comply with such a request.

While it would be a matter of great interest, as well as simple justice, perhaps, to mention some of the many kindly deeds done for public and private interests by Mr. Burrell, all unostentatiously—many secretly—for reasons given above we refrain. However, the great benefit to the city derived from the centering here of his large and growing financial and manufacturing interests is fully appreciated by all; and the fact that the wealth represented in these properties, which makes it possible for him to do what he has, was not acquired by illegitimate speculation or taking unfair advantage of the financial misfortunes of others, but solely as the result of natural ability and well directed efforts along the lines of legitimate commercial pursuits, makes that appreciation all the keener.

#### LITTLE FALLS HOSPITAL.

The Little Falls Hospital Association was incorporated March 23, 1894, with twenty trustees and eighty-one members, all ladies. The first officers were Mrs. A. H. Greene, president; Mrs. Lucy Bucklin, vice president; Mrs. D. T. Lamb, secretary, and Mrs. E. B. Waite, treasurer. The first hospital was started in a modest way in a rented building on North Ann street, with one nurse and a housekeeper. A few years later it was moved to another rented building on East Monroe street, where it was conducted on a larger scale. It had its ups and downs, and heroic work on the part of the ladies was necessary to keep it alive. In perhaps its darkest hour Mrs.

R. H. Smith became president, and a little later, through the efforts of her husband, the late Rollin H. Smith, a city contract was entered into which gave the hospital \$1200 per year. From then the growth was constantly upward. Mrs. Smith's dream of a new building was realized and at this time the association has a property at the corner of Whited and Burwell streets approximating in value \$40,000, practically paid for. The building contains a modern surgery, laboratory, two wards and maternity ward, ten private rooms, mostly furnished by fraternal organizations and individuals, administrative offices, nurses' quarters, etc., and altogether it is a thoroughly equipped institution, capable of meeting the needs of the city for the present, at least. Several improvements and enlargements have been made since the building was erected. At her death Mrs. R. H. Smith bequeathed the institution \$8,000. The will of the late Judge Smith provided for \$1000 more, and altogether Mr. and Mrs. Smith have contributed \$10,000. Other bequests have been made and it is understood that more are provided for. The hospital seems now to be beyond the need of such devoted and self-sacrificing work as was necessary in the beginning and during its earlier history, and for which the people of the city will always feel most grateful as they view with pride and satisfaction the present institution. The last annual report showed an annual expenditure of \$10,583.07, and the average number of patients treated daily was 13 2-3. The present officers are Mrs. George L. Smith, president; Mrs. Gustave Kaltenbacher, secretary, and Mrs. L. H. Fitzgerald, treasurer, together with four vice presidents and twenty trustees. The hospital organization may well be considered to be a model of its kind.



LITTLE FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY.

## PUBLIC GROUNDS

Perhaps no place in the state, of its size, is better provided for in the matter of parks and cemeteries, and these in addition to the many scenic spots of interest and viewpoints so lavishly provided by nature makes Little Falls a most interesting spot in summer time, especially to visitors.

### "MORELAND" OR BURWELL PARK.

This is a beautiful plot of about 30 acres of lawn and woodland, situated on a promontory north of the city and commanding a magnificent view of the gorge and the valley beyond in either direction. It was bequeathed to the city some years ago by the late Hon. Dudley Burwell, whose former home site it was. A substantial fund for its maintenance was also provided by its generous donor, but owing to some litigation over the will it is only recently that the city has been in position to begin actual work on its improvement. In time it bids fail to become one of the scenic beauty spots of Mohawk valley

### WARD SQUARE.

Bounded by East Main, Alexander, Burwell and Waverly Place, contains five acres, the gift of Richard Ray Ward. It is partly wooded, has band stand, fountain, soldiers' monument and other attractions.

### WESTERN PARK.

Bounded by Ann, Gansevoort, Jackson and Garden streets, contains two acres of shaded lawn; has bandstand, fountain, etc.

Sheard Park, one acre on Furnace street; and Clinton Park, south of the Central railroad, also one acre, complete the list of larger parks. Besides there are a number of small parklets, as Gansevoort Triangle, on Salisbury street and Hancock Triangle, East Main street.

## THE PUBLIC PLAYGROUND.

At Burwell and Ray streets has been under process of improvement for a few years past by the city and now contains several acres of level, filled space. It already has a baseball ground and it is expected soon to be in condition to accommodate large circuses, fairs and other outdoor amusements.

Free band concerts are held weekly in the principal parks during the summer season.

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## THE BURIAL PLACES

### THE CITY CEMETERY

On Upper Church street, contains about fifteen acres; is laid out with beautiful walks and drives and has many handsome private vaults and monuments.

### ST. MARY'S

Cemetery is a large plot in a slightly location in the northwestern part of the city. It also has been greatly improved in recent years and contains many fine monuments.

### FAIRVIEW.

Is a large, modernly laid out cemetery, opened a few years ago by the Fairview Cemetery Association, instituted through the enterprise of the late Jacob Zoller. It is a lovely plot of about fifty acres of rolling land, a mile or over northwest of the city, on the Eatonville road. Its walks and drives are laid out with special regard to the landscape effect and it is being constantly embellished by the addition of handsome monuments and private mausoleums. On a commanding elevation is situated a commodious, ornamental receiving vault and chapel, containing fifty catacombs for bodies and ample accommodations for funeral parties in inclement weather,

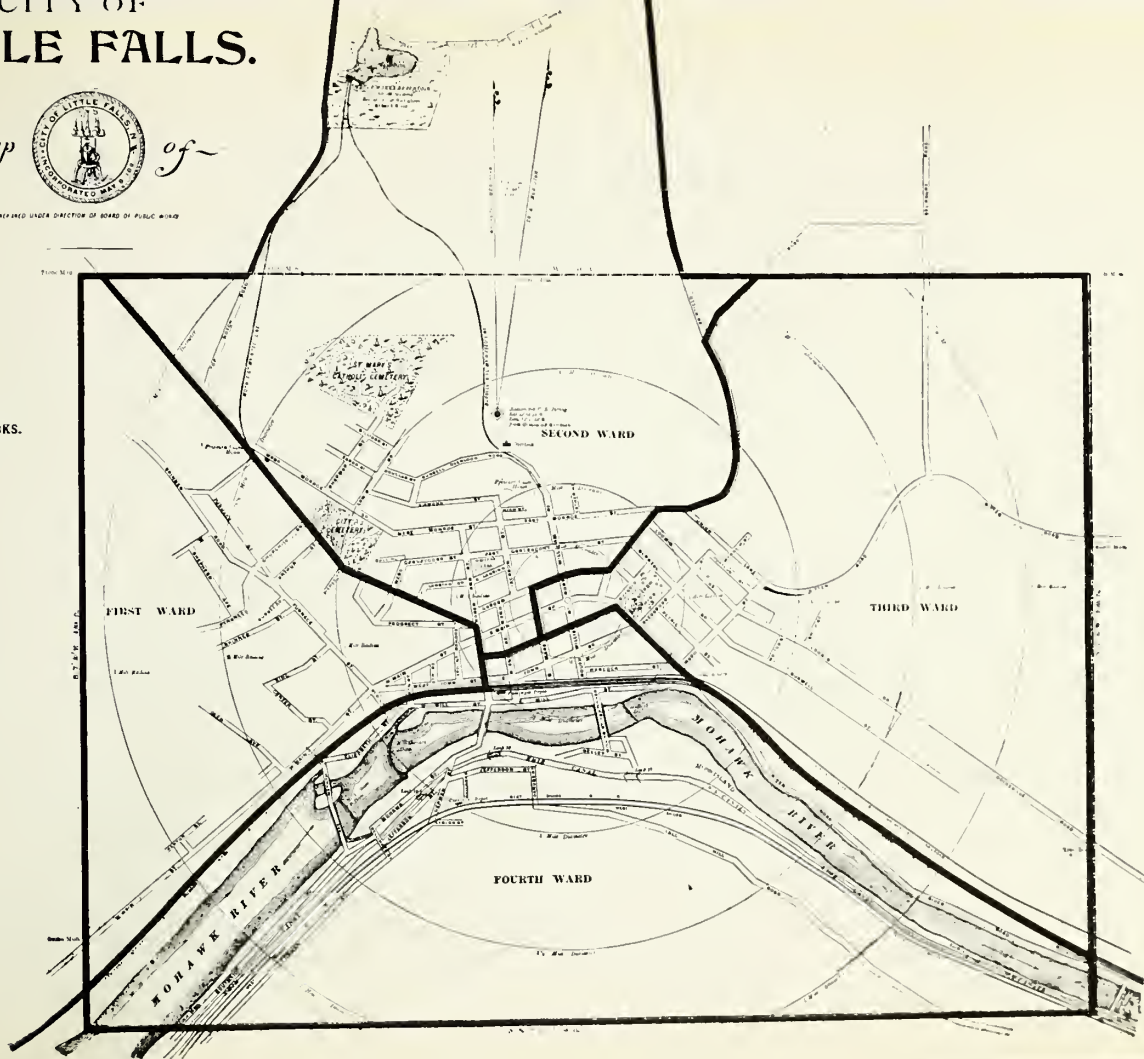


CITY OF  
LITTLE FALLS.



OFFICE UNDER DIRECTION OF BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS.



## RURAL GROVE

Cemetery is on the hills east of Moreland Park and now mostly used by the foreign colony. It contains several acres.

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## HOTELS

Prior to about two years ago the city was for some time quite seriously lacking in hotel accommodations, but since that time conditions have been entirely reversed, by the opening of the new five-story hotel, "The Richmond", a thoroughly modern fire-proof structure, of ornamental brick with cut stone trimmings. It was constructed by the Little Falls Hotel company, an organization of local business men and citizens, whose civic pride prompted the inception of the enterprise. The total cost of this fine property, which adds so much to the commercial advantages of the city, with its furnishings, was upwards of \$135,000. Under the management of the brothers Grant and Brandt Smith, who conduct it, it has already made Little Falls famous in the hotel annals of the Empire state. A picture of this hotel appears on page 72.

Another moderate priced hostelry is the large four-story Hotel Lawton (formerly The Metropolitan), situated at the corner of Main and Mary streets. It is under enterprising management and is enjoying a large patronage by reason of the growing reputation of Little Falls as a good hotel town.

The several smaller hotels doing a prosperous business are The Rockton, corner of Second and John streets; the Clinton Park, on South Ann street; the Farmers, corner of East Main and William; the Globe, on West John street; the Foley House and the Mohawk Valley on the south side of the river.

These and many good rooming and private boarding houses provide ample accommodations for regular guests and transients.

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## GENERAL STATISTICS

Little Falls has ten churches; Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopal, Methodist, Universalist, German Lutheran, Polish Catholic, German Evangelical and Slavish. There are also Christian Science and other religious organizations.

Some of the church edifices are very beautiful and costly, especially the Presbyterian and St. Mary's, which are among the finest in this section.

About 25 Fraternal societies and associations are represented in the city, several of them maintaining handsomely appointed club rooms in connection with their lodges, notable among which are the Elks, City club and Royal Arcanum.

Trades and Labor organizations are also well represented by local branches.

There are two brass bands.

Two National banks with a combined capital and surplus of over \$900,000 and resources running into the millions. The Little Falls National, L. O. Bucklin, president; L. L. Brainard, vice president; F. G. Teall, cashier. The National Herkimer County, D. H. Burrell, president; J. J. Gilbert, vice president; George D. Smith, cashier.

About 60 manufacturing enterprises, enumerated in detail elsewhere in this book.



GENERAL HERKIMER HOME AND MONUMENT.

Over 100 wholesale and retail stores and markets, of which space and time prevent a detailed mention.

The city owns its own splendid water works, costing approximately \$500,000, a complete sewer system and has about two and one half miles of brick and bitulithic pavements on its streets, and more in course of construction.

Electricity for power and lights is plentiful and cheap, as well as gas for lights, cooking and heating.

The spirit of growth and prosperity is ever stimulated and kept alive by the active and efficient Business Men's association, which is known as "The Merchant's and Manufacturers' association." It holds regular monthly meetings, and is constantly on the lookout to aid and assist all new enterprises, encourage and develop all interests which are instituted for the purpose of improving and bettering the city.

The city and country around are beautiful to an eminent degree, and the climate is as salubrious as any in the state, the death rate being lower than that of any other city of its size in the United States. Its pure water and perfect sewer system, and the sanitary condition of its streets, together with nature's inexhaustible supply of ozone that sweeps down from the forest-clad foot hills of the Adirondacks are responsible for this desired condition.

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## THE CENTENNIAL ORGANIZATION

The actual date of the first incorporation of the village of Little Falls was March 11, 1811, which is a most unfavorable time for a public celebration of any event. At a meeting of the Merchants and Manufacturers' Association, held on the 8th of March

last, the question of a celebration was first officially brought up by John B. Koetteritz. A committee of five, consisting of Mayor Timothy Dasey, S. F. Jones, president of the Merchants and Manufacturers' Association; Frank B. Wilcox, J. B. Koetteritz and James G. Burney was appointed to consider the preliminary details of such a celebration. This committee held a meeting March 20, in conjunction with representatives of fraternal and industrial organizations, and the decision to hold a celebration was made. At an adjourned meeting, April 13, Chairman Dasey appointed a general committee of thirty, and the date of the celebration was fixed for the first week in September. At a subsequent meeting of the general committee N. E. Ransom was made chairman, Rush F. Lewis secretary and F. G. Teall treasurer. Still later Chairman Ransom announced the sub-committees, and the organization was perfected. Following is a full list of the committees:

General Committee—N. E. Ransom, F. G. Teall, J. J. Gilbert, L. O. Bucklin, Shelden F. Jones, Abram Zoller, Frank Senior, H. P. Snyder, James G. Burney, Frank Wilcox, J. B. Koetteritz, L. U. Lynt, T. L. Rogers, C. D. Crowley, N. D. Olmstead, James T. Leigh, John Hurley, Grant Smith, Morris Cohn, John F. Leary, E. J. Cooney, Hiram Barnes, John H. Kane, Peter Kirchner, D. W. Collins, R. F. Lewis, James O'Neil, Gabriel Cirasunda, J. Sussman, John Brunjar.

Finance—L. U. Lynt, Frank Senior, Morris Cohn, John F. Leary, P. L. Haight, James O'Neil.

Program—Abram Zoller, L. O. Bucklin, Theodore L. Rogers, John B. Koetteritz, John H. Kane.

Invitation and Reception—J. J. Gilbert, J. G. Burney, Daniel W. Collins, Grant Smith, H. N. Barnes.



Transportation and Speakers—H. P. Snyder, James T. Leigh, John Crowley.

Decorations—John Hurley, Morris Cohn, E. J. Cooney.

Sports and Fireworks—L. U. Lynt, Frank Wilcox, John F. Leary, P. L. Haight, Grant Smith.

Parade—S. F. Jones, John Hurley, Morris Cohn, Gabriel Cirasunda, John Brunjar.

Publicity and Historical—C. D. Crowley, Theodore L. Rogers, N. D. Olmstead, John B. Koetteritz.

Music—Frank Senior, Gabriel Cirasunda, Peter Kirchner, D. W. Collins, John Sussman.

Church Exercises—T. L. Rogers, John F. Leary, Abram Zoller.

### THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

Most of the illustrations in this book have not before been published locally, and some may need special reference here. A fine comparison of the old and new is shown by the lock cuts on pages 46 and 49. The old Pardee mill, shown on page 19, is interesting, as showing the old Octagon church and schoolhouse in the backgrounds. The pictures on pages 27 and 36 are from steel engravings published many years ago. The old Academy on page 43 will revive many pleasant memories at the present time. Profile Rock, on page 57, has been placed beyond photographing possibilities by the barge canal operations. The two Main street views on page 63 are interesting in comparison, and the picture of the old Hinchman house on page 75 will be studied with interest. It is believed that only one person appearing in it is now living. Other pictures speak for themselves, and need no particular mention.

### SUPPLEMENTARY.

The Publicity and Historical committee, on whom has devolved the gathering of the material for and the publication of this book, is indebted to many people for assistance. Notable among these are Raymond S. Spears, who wrote the greater part of the general history of the village and city, and whose work, considering the very limited time he had when called in, is deserving of much praise; Eugene Walrath, one of our oldest manufacturers, who prepared the article on manufacture, also limited as to time and space; Chief Fireman E. J. Cooney for data as to the fire department, old and new; James T. Leigh for valuable assistance in revision of material submitted and suggestions that have helped to give the book such value as it possesses, as well as for most of the special articles on present conditions.

It is no easy matter to prepare the subject matter and illustrations for a story such as this publication contains. The committee hopes that its efforts to prevent errors from creeping in through hurried work have been moderately successful. The book is not expected to rise to the dignity of a complete historical work, but is intended to be in some degree an entertaining story of Little Falls' beginnings and growth, as well as a book that may be preserved for the information it contains. The committee hopes the critics will not be unduly severe.

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### ABSTRACT OF THE FIRST CHARTER OF LITTLE FALLS N. Y.

Chapter eighty-seven of the laws of eighteen hundred and eleven, passed March thirtieth of that year, constituted all that part of the town of Herkimer, in the town and county of Herkimer, contained in the following bounds: Beginning at a point or place on the north side of the Mohawk river, at the corner between the lands occupied by Robert Hinchman and Jost Tygart, thence in a

northerly direction to the southern boundary of Evan Wharry's farm, thence easterly along the ridge of high lands to the boundary line between the counties of Herkimer and Montgomery, thence southerly along the said boundary line to the north shore of the Mohawk river, thence along the said shore to the place of beginning, as "The Village of Little Falls", for the period of fifteen years. Provisions were made in said law for the annual election on the first Tuesday in May of five discreet freeholders, residents within the above limits, as trustees, by the freeholders and inhabitants, residing therein, qualified to vote at town meetings. All the freeholders and inhabitants residing within the village of Little Falls, and their successors, were constituted a body politic and corporate by the name and style of "the trustees of the village of Little Falls", who might bring and defend all manner of actions, causes and complaints in any and all courts, purchase, hold and convey real and personal property for the public use, erect and repair buildings, dig and repair reservoirs for water for the use of the village, purchase and repair fire engines, ladders, buckets, and other instruments and utensils for extinguishing fires, make other necessary improvements, and raise and expend, with the consent of the major part of the freeholders of the village, first given in legal and open meeting, a sum not exceeding five hundred dollars in each year. The trustees were given power to make, ordain, constitute and publish prudential by-laws, rules and regulations, and to enforce obedience to them by expedient fines and forfeitures, not exceeding ten dollars for any offense. The trustees were not empowered to regulate the price of any commodity but bread. There were provisions for the annual election of a collector, whose duty it was to collect and pay over to the treasurer all taxes, and a treasurer, whose duty it was to expend, under the direction of the trustees, all moneys paid over to him. In case of a vacancy in the office of

collector or treasurer, provisions were made that the trustees might, within ten days, fill the vacancy by appointment. The trustees, collector and treasurer, before entering upon the duties of their respective offices, and within ten days after their election, were required to take and subscribe an oath or affirmation, before a justice of the peace of Herkimer county, for the faithful execution of their respective duties. The collector and treasurer, who were to receive compensation for their services, were, in addition, required to give security for the faithful discharge of their duties. Provisions were made for the appointment of twenty-five firemen by the trustees. The trustees were constituted fire wardens with power to regulate the fire department and the conduct of the firemen, being empowered to enforce their regulations by fines and removals, though no fine for any one offense could exceed two dollars, and might be remitted. The trustees were to act as assessors. Any person feeling aggrieved by any assessment might have the assessment reviewed by any three justices of the peace of Herkimer county. It was the duty of the trustees, within twenty days after their election, to assemble and elect one of their number president of the board of trustees, and another of the number to be its clerk. Among other things, it was the president's duty to preside at meetings of the board of trustees and call special meetings thereof, to see that the by-laws of the village were enforced and to prosecute infringements thereon. It was the duty of the clerk to keep the minutes of the board and to perform certain of the president's duties during his absence. Any person elected to the board of trustees, who refused to act, might be fined ten dollars. Public meetings were called by a notice of one week to the inhabitants, given by the president of the board of trustees. There was a corporate seal in the custody of the president.













